Information for Social Change

"an activist organisation that examines issues of censorship, freedom and ethics amongst library and information workers..."

ISC 15. Editorial

Our last issue of ISC on Globalisation and Information, edited by Ruth Rikowski, was the most successful issue we have ever produced in our eight year history. Funded by CILIP, this 80 page issue contained articles by experts in the field, and was sent to a wide range of individuals and organisations. As a result comment and news about ISC appeared in the journals and websites of the World Development Movement, Not for Profit, Sustainable Development International, Library Association Record, Library Management, IGLA, ATTAC, Radio 4, Sussex University, The Commoner, UNESCO, Managing Information, Public Library Journal, Morning Star, EBLIDA, IFLA, Weblog, Norweld, the Progressive Librarians Guild, and elsewhere. See Ruth's article in this issue on the full impact of the now legendary ISC 14.

ISC 15 has taken for its theme : Libraries for life : democracy, diversity, delivery. Sounds familiar? It should do, because this is also the theme of the 2002 International Federation of Library Associations conference in Glasgow, being held between 18-21 August. ISC will have two delegates at IFLA : Ruth Rikowski and Shiraz Durrani. If you are going to IFLA, please make yourself known to them. Ruth has organised a fringe meeting on globalisation, libraries and education, which will be held at Glasgow University on 22 August, 1-5pm. This will be followed by a reception hosted by LINK. If you can make it to the meeting and/or the reception, please come along.

"Democracy is not itself an institution but a process of emancipation" (Communist Party of Britain draft resolution - winning the battle for democracy, 2000). I like this quote because democracy is often spoken of as an institution rather than a process. In this issue I ask "Will the real democracy please stand up ?" as I try to separate the western model of democracy (vote counting, unless you live in Venezuela) with some alternative, and altogether more vibrant examples of real democracy in countries such as Cuba. Also in this section, we have a "Report on the ALA Delegation trip to Cuba" (which includes an extensive list of Cuban websites) and a "Resolution on the Destruction of Palestinian Libraries, Archives, and Other Cultural Institutions" (submitted by ISC to CILIP, and based on a PLG resolution to ALA).

Diversity is another buzz word about much is spoken and written, but very little is actually done. Diversity, like democracy. Is regarded as a western concept and the whole world should fit the western model. It is refreshing, then, to be given two perspectives of diversity not from the oppressor but from the oppressed : the peoples of Kenya ("Never be silent") and Uganda ("A personal viewpoint on the Expulsion, 30 years on". It is also good to be reminded of the struggles wages by ordinary people against their colonial oppressors. British history books only tell one side of the story. The heroic and revolutionary fight put up by the courageous Mau Mau freedom fighters is rarely told - because it lifts a corner on Britain's dark colonial history, and it tells a story of how working people can successfully organise themselves, fight back and triumph against overwhelming odds. The divide and rule tactics of colonialism are laid bare in "I have a dream".

Delivery focuses on "Tackling social exclusion". The concept is explained and a view is taken of how well social exclusion is being tackled by public libraries in Britain. There are still many barriers to the take up of library services by marginalised and oppressed groups such as the homeless, Travellers and refugees. Few library services have the strategies, structures and cultures to seriously challenge and tackle exclusion. And for those which have started the process, there is already a backlash against social inclusion. Nevertheless, there is some good practice emerging regarding policy implementation, services for children and young people, and mobile libraries. Much of this progress is being facilitated by The Network (tackling social exclusion in libraries, museums, archives and galleries) which produces an

excellent monthly newsletter and delivers professional and in-house training on all aspects of social exclusion.

This issue also has some articles which follow up on the theme of the last ISC - globalisation :. "Taking power from the global corporations" and "What does the future hold for our public libraries", (a scary but realistic assessment of the direction that one of our oldest and most cherished public institutions is taking). There is also an excellent analysis of "The GATS' Article I, paragraph 3" which sounds very dull but which is actually extremely significant for library and information workers. Finally, Martyn Lowe has contributed a very practical article on how to wind up a campaign or organisation ("After the Organisation")

Part five contains reviews of "Housmans 2002 Peace Diary with World Peace Directory" and "The Guru Guide to the Knowledge Economy". Finally, there is are adverts for the ISC fringe meeting at IFLA, for an ATTAC conference in November and for "Capital and Class", journal of the Conference of Socialist Economists. I would strongly recommend that regular readers of ISC take out a subscription to this journal. It is definitely on our wavelength as evidenced by these articles in the latest issue : "The Labor Theory of Value and the strategic role of alienation", "Are things really getting better ? The labour market experience of black and female youth at the start of the century" and "Managers and managerialism in the post-privatised utilities".

The next issue of ISC will be out in January 2003. It will include a full report back on IFLA. If you have any articles or news items which you would like included in the next issue, please send them to the editorial address by 30 December 2002.

For enquiries contact
http://libr.org/isc

Information for Social Change

"an activist organisation that examines issues of censorship, freedom and ethics amongst library and information workers..."

ISC 15. Never be silent (1)

Shiraz Durrani

Important political developments were taking place among African communities towards the end of the period we are considering. The people who had suffered the most from colonial grabbing of land began to organise politically. The participation of Africans in the First World War increased their awareness that colonialism could be defeated through organised activities. Thus 1919 saw the formation of the Kikuyu Association by a group of people who saw no other way to fight colonialism. The Association opposed the land alienation as well as forced labour, tax increases, and the proposed wage cuts.

In 1921 Harry Thuku formed a more militant organisation - East African Association - which rejected the "fundamental premises of white rule". Thuku protested against the proposed reduction in African wages, land alienation, compulsory labour recruitment, increases in hut and poll taxes, and kipande (2) laws which were introduced for "controlling movements of African labourers and for locating and identifying them" (Makhan Singh, 1969).

The process of formation of political organisations - such as Kikuyu Central Association - continued in the following period as we will examine in the next chapter. But as Pugliese says, "from the early twenties onward, the Gikuyu increasingly began to question missionary motives and objectives...The authority of the missions was no longer taken for granted by the mission-educated Gikuyu... Among the group of mission-educated young men were most, if not all, the future Gikuyu politicians and intellectuals of the 'first generation'."

The colonial laws prevented local African population from owning printing presses or newspapers. But this did not mean that they lacked effective means of communication. We shall examine later an important aspect of their communication practice - oral communication systems which were further developed during the period of Mau Mau. As far as print medium and newspapers were concerned, many innovative methods were evolved to bypass the embargo placed by colonial administration on African ownership of presses. Alliances were made with progressive Indian workers in the press field to carry news and views that reflected the African point of view in Asian-owned newspapers. Special features carried news of significant developments affecting the majority African population. This was the case, for instance, when Harry Thuku formed the Young Kikuyu Association in 1921. The announcement about the formation of the Association was made by Harry Thuku in a local newspaper on June 11, 1921 (3)

Developments on the broader social and political level during this period influenced the developments in the communication field as well. The contradictions between European settlers and Kenyans were sharpening. During the First World War, one hundred thousand Africans working as carriers lost their lives - a fact that is given little importance in many history books or in theories of (non)development. After the War, the colonial Government took no steps to compensate Kenyan workers. Indeed, it increased repression by increasing taxes, reducing wages and introduced the hated kipande (similar to the pass in South Africa) so as to consolidate the forced labour system. The government also sought to divide the African population from the Indian community by various policies so as to divide African and Asian workers who were beginning to form a working class alliance.

In July 1920, the British Government declared Kenya a "Colony". Makhan Singh (1969) explains the reasons for this: This was aimed at ensuring that the British could deal with the land and labour of

African people as they thought fit. It was to guarantee that the land taken away from the African people and given to settlers would remain settlers' land and that the forced labour system prevailing in Kenya could be further tightened. Secondly a conspiracy began to be organised to make Kenya a "White Man's Country" and to establish a white settlers' government. Thus the African people were being turned from a "protected people" into a slave people.

The Kenyan people resisted these moves of the British to consolidate their control over Kenya. They started organising themselves into various organisations which could lead the struggle against the British rule. These included the Kikuyu Association (1919); the Young Kikuyu Association which later changed its name to the East African Association in order to allow all Kenyan and East African nationalities to come together in one organisation; the Piny Owacho - Young Kavirondo Association - which was founded in December 1921 at a meeting at Lunda, Gem attended by about 8,000 people.

The settlers used the press they controlled to fight the growth of such African organisations. For example, the settlers' daily, the Leader (July 7, 1921) commented thus on the growth of powerful organisations among the African and Indian peoples and the unity among them: According to all evidence, the natives of the country ...have been moved to make up an attempt towards political and industrial organisation. This is... further excited by the unmeasured agitation of the Indian community for equal political rights... A new situation has arisen and it would be foolish to ignore it... Those who play with the principles of political equality when no racial equality exists are playing with fire with risk of grave disaster.

The Leader again reflected the settlers' alarm in January, 1922 in connection with the activities of the Kavirondo Association: The petition (sent by the Kavirondo Association) to the Chief Native Commissioner, is therefore the more significant coming as it does on the heels of similar memoranda from other native bodies...the native races not only in Kenya Colony but in other parts of Africa are aspiring to high things...

The year 1922 was an important one in the history of Kenyan people's struggle against colonial rule. A new unity among various nationalities, large and small, was being forged together with the consolidation of powerful anti-colonial organisation which gave a direction to the aspiration for freedom of the people. Makhan Singh (1969) shows the situation in the country by early 1922: The African people in Kenya were struggling unitedly for their rights under the leadership of the East African Association. The militancy, enthusiasm and unity of Africans of all [nationalities] were being built from the Coast to Nyanza. Co-operation between Africans, Indians and progressive Europeans was also moving forward from strength to strength.

The colonial government regarded this militant situation with much concern. It clearly saw the leaders as well as the organisations they led as their chief enemies. The East African Association was considered its main enemy. It therefore arrested its leader, Harry Thuku on March 14, 1922 hoping that the organisation will thereby collapse. But instead, the working class saw this as a direct attack against their economic and political interests and organised a general strike. Thousands of people took part in a demonstration in Nairobi, demanding the release of Harry Thuku. Unable to control the situation, the colonial police, helped by armed settlers, began firing on unarmed demonstrators. About a hundred and fifty people were massacred on that day although the settler paper, The Leader, tried to minimise the seriousness of the situation by reporting that 27 were killed.

This massacre was to prove a turning point in the history of Kenya in that it showed clearly the fact that colonial rule was maintained by armed force and the only way to dislodge it was through an armed resistance. The events leading to the arrest of Harry Thuku, and the stand taken by various publications demonstrated the role of press and the side it supported. An examination of the two newspapers, The East African Chronicle - a paper run by progressive Asian Kenyans, and the White settler paper, the Leader of British East Africa is instructive in exposing the different class stand they took over the major issues of the time.

The East African Chronicle was founded in 1919 by Manilal A. Desai and spoke for the interests of the workers - both Indian and African. Its stand came under attack from a settler contemporary, the Leader of British East Africa, for it realised that the unity of African and Indian nationalist forces could do much

4

damage to the economic and political monopoly of the settlers and indeed to the colonial rule as a whole.

The events of the year 1922 indicated the clear lines along which the Kenyan society was divided. An examination of various newspaper reports on the events of the year shows that in line with the actual opposing forces in the society as a whole, the press itself was also similarly divided between these forces, some supporting the African and Indian side and others supporting the settler and colonial administration side.

Thus by 1922, the contradictions between the settlers and the colonial administration, on the one hand, and the African peasants and workers as well as Indian workers and progressive Asian intellectuals, on the other, were becoming sharper. Each side had mustered its forces for the intensification of the struggle in the next period. The publishing industry became a major force in the armoury of each side.

We will never be silent (4)

  On January 7th we were surrounded at Bahati
  by the colonial army.

  We will never be silent
  until we get land to cultivate
  and freedom in this country of ours, Kenya.

  Home Guards were the first to go and close the gates
  and Johnnies entered while the police surrounded the location.

  You, traitors! You dislike your children,
  caring only for your stomachs;
  You are the enemies of our people.

  We will never be silent
  until we get land to cultivate
  and freedom in this country of ours, Kenya.

Notes:

(1) From a forthcoming publication by Shiraz Durrani: Never Be Silent: Publishing and Imperialism in Kenya. 1886 - 1963. London. Vita Books & New York, Mau Mau Research Centre.

(2) Kipande - "registration certificate recording work periods, wages, comments by employers, and other employment-related matters; from 1920, all adult males were required to carry the kipande under penalty of heavy fines" - Sicherman (1990).

(3) Makhan Singh (1969): History of Kenya's Trade Union Movement to 1952. Nairobi. East African Publishing House. pp. 10-11 (where a part of the announcement is reproduced).

(4) A Mau Mau liberation song.

For enquiries contact
http://libr.org/isc

Information for Social Change

"an activist organisation that examines issues of censorship, freedom and ethics amongst library and information workers..."

ISC 15. The GATS' Article I, paragraph 3....

By Fiona Hunt

Introduction

As the World Trade Organization continues to forge ahead with its negotiations on the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), the public is beginning to sit up and take notice. This increased awareness stems from the fact that more and more writers and political observers around the world are focusing on the topic of the GATS and its potentially harmful effect on the public services sector worldwide. In addition, public lectures, public demonstrations, email listservs and Internet web sites have all done their part to bring the issue into a more public light. GATS supporters have been responding consistently with the assurance that public services like libraries will not be affected by the GATS because they will be protected under Article 1:3 of the agreement, which exempts "governmental services." According to GATS proponents, there is nothing to worry about.

What they fail to point out however, is that Article 1:3 of the GATS is far from explicit in its goals. The text is ambiguous, rendering several interpretations possible, each with very different potential consequences for the public sector.

Individuals trying to understand what the GATS agreement means and what its consequences could be will likely find themselves swimming in a sea of legal-ese that obscures the real significance of the text. The explanation that follows, focusing on Article 1:3 and its potential impact on libraries, will hopefully serve to clarify some of the most salient points and assist readers in drawing their own conclusions regarding the GATS and its potential impact on the public services sector.

What is Article 1:3 ?

What it really means...

Clause (c) above constitutes the potential danger to libraries and the public sector. It appears to mean that "if a service is provided on a non-commercial basis but in competition with other suppliers or on a commercial basis but without competition, it is not a service supplied in exercise of governmental authority." (1)

Two possible examples of Article 1:3:c in action in libraries could include i) a fee-based business/market research service attached to a library's reference department. While this kind of service would most likely find itself competing with companies in the private sector offering similar services, Article 1:3:c seems to indicate that it wouldn't matter if that were the case; simply offering a service on a commercial basis could make the library in question ineligible for "government service" status. Secondly, ii), according to Article 1:3:c, public libraries' provision of free Internet service could make libraries "competitors" of for-profit companies operating in the same sphere. In both examples above, these libraries would presumably no longer be considered to be services "supplied in the exercise of governmental authority." The crux of the matter revolves around how Article 1:3 is interpreted.

Possible interpretations

As Steven Shrybman, a Canadian lawyer noted for his work on the GATS and other WTO agreements points out, the wording of the clauses in Article 1:3 means that their interpretation is open for speculation. (2) One interpretation in the event of a challenge from the private sector might view the public role of the library as a whole to be the over-riding factor, despite the commercial or competitive nature of any of its parts, and might overturn the challenge, ruling that libraries provide services "in the exercise of governmental authority." On the other hand, it could just as easily be decided that if any aspect of the service being provided is operating commercially and/or in competition with another provider, the GATS rules apply. In this case, the public service role provided by libraries would not enter into the equation. The problem is that we simply do not know how the clauses in question would be interpreted in the event of a challenge.

Should a foreign service provider bring forth a challenge against a library, the interpretation of these clauses would rest with the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body (DSP) which is made up of trade experts and is known for its corporate-friendly rulings. If the WTO chose to follow its own precedent, set over the course of numerous past dispute resolutions, the clauses of Article 1:3 could be interpreted in such a way that any evidence of a library's provision of commercial and/or competitive service could disqualify it from government service status.(3)

According to Ellen Gould, GATS researcher for the Transnational Institute in Paris, and Murray Dobbin, "at the October 14, 1998 meeting of the Council for Trade in Services, the body responsible for services at the WTO, it was agreed that: 'exceptions provided in Article I:3 of the Agreement [the exemption for governmental services] needed to be interpreted narrowly.'"(4) This means that libraries' public role and provision of equitable access to information would not be taken into consideration and the GATS rules would be applied to libraries in strict accordance with clause (c) of Article 1:3.

How can public services like libraries be protected?

The goal of the GATS, explicitly stated in the preamble of the agreement, is simple: "the early achievement of progressively higher levels of liberalization of trade in services through successive rounds of multilateral negotiations." (5) By introducing fee-for-service arrangements in their efforts to survive the funding challenges of our times, libraries have unwittingly opened themselves up to the potential of a challenge from the private sector under the GATS. Furthermore, libraries' provision of equitable access to the Internet, in competition with private sector providers of the same service, could also bring libraries into the GATS' line of fire.

As Shrybman suggests in his exhaustive report on the GATS, prepared for the Canadian Library Association and other interested parties,

"The most effective way to guard against the corrosive influence of this regime would be to establish that public sector libraries are entirely exempt from the GATS disciplines as services delivered 'in the exercise of government authority' under Article 1:3 of the text. Should this effort fail, it would then be critical to ensure that measures concerning public sector libraries remain free from National Treatment, Market Access and other GATS commitments that would be invoked if commitments are made that affect the services provided by this public sector." (6)

Conclusion

Clearly, there is something to worry about where the GATS is concerned. GATS proponents like to cite the governmental exemptions clause (Article 1:3:b) in defense of the agreement and to calm those worried about privatization of the public sector. As we have seen however, Article 1:3 is far from clear about its role in the protection of public services and may in fact open the door to successful challenges from the private sector. As Steve Shrybman suggests, the solution (short of canceling the GATS altogether) is to carve out a guarantee in clear, unambiguous language, that public services will be protected from GATS rules and will remain, without question, in the public sphere.

It is my hope that, armed with this knowledge, more and more people will be able to participate in the debate raging over this issue, and to contribute, in whatever way they deem appropriate, to its

resolution.

For further information or to ask questions, the author can be reached at: fiona.hunt   zu.ac.ae

References

1. Krajewski, Markus. Research Paper, Written for Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL). Section III, Para 3.

2. Shrybman, Steven. An Assessment of the Impact of the General Agreement on Trade in Services on Policy, Programs and Law Concerning Public Sector Libraries. Prepared for the Canadian Library Association, Canadian Association of University Teachers, Canadian Association of Research Libraries, Ontario Library Association, Saskatchewan Library Association, Manitoba Library Association, Industry Canada, British Columbia Library Association, Library Association of Alberta, National Library of Canada by Steven Shrybman, of Sack Goldblatt Mitchell, Ottawa. p. iv < http://www.cla.ca/resources/gats.pdf>

3. ibid.

4. Gould, Ellen and Murray Dobbin. What is at Stake for Local Governments at the WTO? #2, Para 2

5. General Agreement on Trade in Services: Preamble. Para 3.

6. Shrybman, p. ix

For enquiries contact
http://libr.org/isc

Information for Social Change

"an activist organisation that examines issues of censorship, freedom and ethics amongst library and information workers..."

ISC 15. After the Organisation: A guide for Activists & Information workers

Martyn Lowe

Introduction

There are many manuals that are aimed at political organisers, which cover how to successfully organise a campaign, yet none of these ever go into how one might efficiently close down a campaigning body. Closing down an organisation might seem like a simple thing to do, yet in doing so one should always keep in mind a few simple practicalities, such as the fact that the organisation might still be receiving mail for many years after it has ceased to exist.

Likewise, one should also pay attention to preserving the achievements of the organisation, & making sure that the work of the organisation can be developed in the long term. This article is based upon the experience of both founding and closing down a number of campaigning bodies. It is aimed at both campaigners and information workers, because both should work together in closing down organisations efficiently, and in so doing further the work of the campaign.

Having spent many a happy hour dealing with the various queries that have resulted from work engendered by my previous efforts within long ago campaigning organisations, this article might also be viewed as a cry from the heart. This is NOT intended to be a definitive work upon the subject, but to raise issues, and indicate the kind of options that we might all try.

After the Campaign

All campaigning bodies have a natural life span :

1. You become concerned about an issue or various related issues.
2. You get together with like minded people and talk over the issue(s).
3. You found an organisation to work upon the issue(s).
4. You follow the issue(s) through.
5. You succeed in your aims, & the issue(s) becomes main stream concerns.
6. You fold up the organisation.

Sounds simple? It is not. The very act of folding up an organisation should be as well planned as the campaign itself.

Finance and Follow up work, or Dealing with the mail.

Some two decades after it folded MERAG (The Middle East Research and Action Group), still receives correspondence. The same is true for any organisation. People will still use a directory anything up to a decade after it has become out of date. So the mail for the organisation will still come pouring in. There are several practical things that one can do about this.

Perhaps one of the most practical things to do, is to make sure upon closing down the campaigns bank

account, that some money is put aside to finance any follow up enquires that might come through. A budget should be worked out for this, based upon the volume of correspondence that the campaign has received. Part of this budget should be to cover postage, while the rest might be used for information packs, which might go out with standard form letters.

It might also be noted that under UK financial rules, that fiscal records should be kept for a period of 7 years. It might sound like an unjustified expenditure, but if an organisation has had a lot of money passing through it, then it might be a good idea to have the final accounts properly audited, or at least looked at by an accountant.

It is important to do a press mailing stating that the organisation has folded .Such mailings should also be sent out to those directories in which the organisation has appeared. Just because an organisation has not been mentioned in a print version of a directory, does not mean that it has been removed from the directory database, which might still be sold on to others.

As anyone who has ever put together a directory will tell you, people can be very sloppy in how they return directory update forms, and in many organisations they just don't seem to regard such forms as important. Thus the various inaccuracies which are to be found with a high percentage of such works.

Webpage information

One way of dealing with any future enquires about the organisation is by maintaining ones website. For example: Organisationen til Oplysning om Atomkraft (The Organisation for Information on Nuclear Power) which folded in 2000, still gives information about its closure, and its previous website information. It is be found at: http://www.ooa.dk/

One advantage of maintaining such a website is that it means that one can easily refer people on to informationabout the campaign/organisation, and give links to follow up work and related campaigning bodies. There should also be agreed upon an email contact for any further queries that might be received.

Archives

One of the characteristics of many organisations is that its archives may well be held by a group of between 6-12 people who were involved in the campaign. Some organisations hold a central archive, but this truth still holds true. From my experience within a number of organisations, such as for example: Operation Namibia and Greenpeace (London), working upon putting together an archive after the organisation has folded can be a very time consuming effort.

People within many campaigning bodies only really start to consider their archives years after they have folded. Much effort could of been saved by dealing with these issues at the time. The Committee of 100, which folded in 1968, is also currently engaged upon a consultation within its former members about setting up a committee archive.

Many activist are maybe just too good at activism to ever get around to clearing up the filing system, or passing on their archives. A lot of radical activity can get lost as a result. There are many archives that are most willing to take the archives of radical organisations. For example: The International Institute of Social History (IISH) in Amsterdam. You can view the IISH website at: http://www.iisg.nl/

I have already handed over the following archives that I held for the following bodies to IISH: Librarians Within the Peace Movement (LWPM), Liwo Support Group and Information for Social Change (ISC) up to 1999.

There are also another number of Archival institutions that I could suggest, but you get the idea. The important point being that those 6-12 people who were centrally involved within any campaign should all make sure that the archives of the organisation go to one place.

Safeguarding Our History, or telling OUR story

One should also look to the issue of how we might maintain an activist history. The activist view can never be the same as how academics view what one has achieved. Telling it in our own words is perhaps more important than having to rely upon the changing views of the historian.

During the 'second wave' of anti-nukiller-weapons protests in the early 1980s, upon one demonstration there was a banner which held the right for historians to have future work. As any librarian or information worker will know, there are just too many secondary sources to refer to, yet the most valuable sources of such accounts come from our own history, as people that were/ are politically engaged.

Selling ones history

One other aspect of the work of any defunct organisation that should be considered, is its Intellectual Property Rights. Many of the texts that organisations generate are co-operative works. Does the copyright on these texts hold with the organisation, or with the individuals who wrote them ?

Assigning copyright after some 20-30 years on can become something of a problem, should you ever have to go into such things. Who drafted what and with whom is not the kind of question that one really wants to pursue a couple of decades later. Even if you can remember who did what, contacting the individual with a copyright question might be near impossible to do.

To go back to the example of Greenpeace (London),many of the former activists of this group are scattered throughout the globe, in such places as the USA, Germany, Australia, France, Ireland, and New Zealand. So for all practical purposes any decision about issues concerning aspects of any defunct organisation, such as intellectual property rights, will almost inevitably come down to a small group of people that have managed to stay in contact over the years. Hardly the most democratic way to deal with these issues, even if it is the most pragmatic one.

One solution to this problem is to hand over the intellectual property rights to the body that holds the archive of the organisation. Call this funding the care and preservation of the archive if you will. This can save a lot of problems and unnecessary effort in the long term.

Another approach is to set up things so that any finances generated by the subsequence publication of these texts are used by a body/bodies that further the work of the defunct campaigning body. This can be very financially efficient if this is handed over to a trust or educational charity. It is also very tax efficient too. This could also be a painless way in which to further the work of the campaign.

On a personal note

I have been involved with, or have had contact with some 2,500 - 3,000 organisation in an activist life of nearly 35 years. That also sound like a lot to me, but it is based upon the number of campaigning bodies that I am/have been involved within.

This brings me on to two thoughts. One. That activists should include something about what to do with their archives within their will. I have already done this. Two. That activists should actively engage with oral history projects..

For example: The Imperial War Museum, in London, has an oral history archive of 20th century pacifists. This is not something that I have ever done so far, but it is something that I would like to do.

My CV is far from 'bog standard', and having worked with some of the key figures within various radical circles, I think someone might find some of my observations and anecdotes maybe of interest. Anyone interested in doing this with me ?

An example that proves the point

Right now I am amassing information about the wave of pedestrian activism that took place in the 1970s

and early 1980s. For example: the ELF (Edinburgh Liberation Front), was active around the time circa 1970-1973. They used to give tourist walks around the slums of the city, and were one of the first groups to campaign for the streets of Edinburgh to be pedestrianised.

I am not sure what ever happened to their archives, but am trying to find this out. My first contact with the ELF came while I was involved with YAPPU (the Youth association of the Peace Pledge Union) some 30 years ago. My own memories go back to visiting some of them in Edinburgh sometime during 1972. We all went to the pub together, followed by playing frisbee in the park.

Previous to this a policeman had turned up at their flat with, yet another, summons which resulted from their work to pedestrianise one of the streets within the city. At the time 4 of the group had some 17 different criminal charges against them for this work. This included being apprehended at 1.30am while painting double yellow (no parking) lines along the street. ELF also produced a periodical entitled Roots. I have copies # 5-8 of this work. Yet what became of their archives ?

In conclusion

I am not sure that I have all of the answers about what might be done in closing down an organisation effectively, but I hope that I might have given some pointers about what might be done, and what has been done in the past. As to the problem that I have with an academic view of radical history, I'll return to that at some later stage. Yet I should make a few points about this issue right now.

Many activists regard academics as parasites who live upon an intellectual dissection of their radical activism,while contributing zilch towards the radical work that they are making 'a nice living' upon. This is not to say that I am against an academic approach to radical work, just that the words and views of the activists should receive greater attention. Any money that results from such publicity should go towards furthering the work, rather than the coffers of any academic institution which might never have worked upon the issue in the first place.

So who can use our archives, and under what conditions, is an issue that we should all think about. I write this as a commited activist. If an academic or academic body is going to make a profit out of my work, then they should pay me towards the furtherance of such radical work.

A couple of afterthoughts

A couple of days after I drafted the above, thinking about what I wrote, a couple of other ideas came to my mind. I should also explain that I sometimes will write an article in one go, & then come back to it a few days later. That way I can see it afresh, and add lines or modify the text to make points much clearer. The first draft of this article was just under 2,000 words, which I wrote in one go. So here are my thoughts over the last few days.

Having concluded the above I looked through a number of campaigning manuals, and came upon just one book which has just two pages about what do after a campaigning body has been closed down. It did not refer to many of the points that I mention above. It strikes me that maybe there is a need for a pamphlet which goes more fully into this issue. Please don't ask me to write such a work, although I would be willing to give my thoughts and ideas to anyone that might be interested in writing such a work.

Part of my political thinking is that I should raise new issues and concerns. The true work of a radical is to take the over view, and be able to highlight those concerns and issues which are getting no attention. My shining example of this is Dorothea Woods, who died last year. She pioneered the work that is currently being carried out on child soldiers.

So this article is really just intended to raise some interest into this subject. If you have any references or ideas that might add to the above, then feel please to contact ISC with a letter on the subject that might be added to the next issue of the journal.

My other observation is about the kind of job forms that exist. Wouldn't it be nice if such forms also included a section for references for those websites upon which ones work might be seen. However, such a work as : 'a new approach to CVs' , and 'redesigning application forms' will have to wait for now. I look forward to reading your reaction to the above.

For enquiries contact
http://libr.org/isc

Information for Social Change

"an activist organisation that examines issues of censorship, freedom and ethics amongst library and information workers..."

ISC 15. Will the real democracy please stand up?

John Pateman

Democracy is a much vaunted concept when it is espoused by the likes of Tony Blair and George W Bush. But democracy does not seem to apply to countries like Venezuela and Cuba. When an attempt was made to oust Hugo Chavez, the democratically elected President of Venezuela, the US supported this coup and said that there was more to democracy than "winning the largest number of votes". What George Bush (who was not elected by the largest number of votes) meant was that protecting the vested interests of the Venezuelan oil producers was more important than meeting the needs of the Venezuelan people. Chavez received not one, but two, huge landslide majorities by popular vote.

By contrast, 154 million US voters did NOT vote for Bush - in a nation of 200 million voters this constitutes the majority. There is a very useful analysis of the US presidential election in "Stupid White Men" by Michael Moore. In what he terms "a very American coup", Moore points out that Al Gore received 539,898 more votes than Bush. The coup began in 1999 when the Bush campaign paid $4 million to Database Technologies to go through Florida's voter rolls and remove anyone "suspected of being a former felon". Database did as they were told. And before long 173,000 registered voters in Florida were permanently wiped off the voter rolls. Many of these were Black. It is estimated that 90% of them would have voted Democrat.

But there is no longer much need for fixing the result of western elections. People are voting with their feet and abstaining from elections in large numbers. As Robert Silver points out in this issue of ISC ("Taking power from the global corporations") :

"The democratic ideal of multi-party elections with universal adult suffrage became the dominant political form of the nation-state in 20th century. In 1900 no country had achieved this. A century later most have. In the last 25 years of the century 113 countries introduced multi-party elections. But the universal advance of parliamentary democracy has become a universal fraud. Declining turnout in elections demonstrates the extent of the rejection of the current political system by all sections of society."

Cuba has been added to the US list of so-called rogue states. Bush will not lift the illegal 40 year blockade of Cuba until "democratic reform takes places". In fact, the Cuban system is much more democratic than the US, and the UK for that matter. You do not need to be a millionaire to stand as a candidate, and more than 90% of the population vote in Cuba's municipal, provincial and national elections :

"I lived in Cuba during the 1997-98 municipal, provincial and national elections. I witnessed door-to-door enumeration (no longer done in Canada), nomination of multiple candidates in the streets, posted biographies in lieu of campaigns and election of municipal delegates. The vote count is always public. Cuba's municipal election system is very similar to our Canadian municipal system.

Fidel Castro is nominated and re-elected every five years, first by the people of his municipality, then nominated and elected to the National Council of State and finally nominated and elected as president and commander-in-chief. The latter two elections are held by the newly elected delegates at the first meeting of the National Assembly of Peoples Power following the national election.

It is true that, other than municipal elections, only one name appears on the ballot and it is put there by

the nominating commissions chaired by the trade unions and made up of representatives of all mass organizations and municipalities. If the voters reject a candidate, another nomination and election must be held. Fifty per cent plus one is required to win any election in Cuba. All elected representatives are required to have regular accountability meetings with voters. All elected representatives are subject to recall by the voters. Most importantly, the Communist Party does not take part in the process" (Dave Thomas, Canadian-Cuban Friendship Association)

Recent articles in Granma International also indicate that democracy is alive and well in Cuba. For example "One billion books in 43 years of Revolution" was the headline when Fidel Castro inaugurated the Alejo Carpentier print works, the most modern in the country, with the capacity to produce 15 million volumes a year. Castro also announced the launch of family libraries : a new form of access to literature. The aim is to produce 100,000 copies of a collection of the best works in Cuban and universal literature. The first collection will cost just 60 pesos. This will enable all Cuban families to have their own library, at home. This is also a direct response to the US funded so-called "independent library movement", supplied, financed and directed by the US Interests Section in Havana.

The US thinks that it can purchase anything in the world, including the hearts and minds of the Cuban people. The United States Development Agency USAID will distribute almost SIXTEEN MILLION DOLLARS in US taxpayers money to a avriety of anti Castro groups and projects this year alone. The figures were revealed in May when USAID posted its "Update on the Program to Promote Cuban Transition to Democracy" on its website http://usinfo.state.gov. The programmes stated goal is to "promote rapid, peaceful, transition to democracy in Cuba, helping develop civil society", which is a somewhat wordy euphemism for removing the revolutionary government from power and replacing it with a government compliant to Washington's wishes.

The website is worth a visit because there you will see that USAID spends nothing in Cuba on real development projects such as education, health and economic development. If you look at the country page of any other developing nation on this site you will see that the US gives millions to other countries for these purposes. All it does with regards to Cuba is spend millions stuffing the pockets of the anti Castro mob in Florida with cash. Who then give a lot of it to Cubans on the island to become dissidents :

A. Funding so-called human rights activists ($8,099,171)

1. Freedom House ($500,000)

Distributes Spanish language books, pamphlets, computers and other materials to dissidents in Cuba. Freedom House is run by Frank Calzon a well-known former CIA operative.

2. The Center for a Free Cuba ($2,249,709)

Gathers and disseminates information concerning the alleged human rights situation in Cuba. Transmits the writings of so-called Cuban human rights activists to "non governmental" organisations worldwide. The Center sponsors travel to Cuba by representatives of "democractic" societies and distributes "pro-democracy" literature on the island. A former director of the Center for a Free Cuba is Otto Reich, now Bush's Under Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs. Robert Kent from the "friends of Cuban Libraries" (sic) has admitted that his trips to Cuba were finaced by the Center for a Free Cuba.

3. The Institute for Democracy in Cuba ($1,000,000)

Assists dissident activists in Cuba. Provides assistance to political prisoners and their families.

4. Cuban Dissidence Task Group ($250,000)

Publishes and disseminates worldwide the written analysis of Cuban dissident activists on the island. Provides assistance to political prisoners and their families.

5. International Republican Institute ($1,674,462)

Helps create a bolster international solidarity comittees in Latin America and Europe in order to provide "material, moral and ideological support" for dissident activists in Cuba.

6. Freedom House : Cuban Democracy Project ($825,000)

Promotes the formation of a dissident leadership in Cuba by linking dissident organisations in Cuba to one another and to sympathetic organisations in Europe, North America and elsewhere. It was this project that financed the visit to Cuba by two right-wing Czech politicians who were caught and expelled by Cuban security in 2001.

7. Grupo de Apoyo a la Disidencia (Dissident Support Group) ($1,200,000)

Provides assistance and informational materials to political prisoners and their families.

8. Accion Democratica Cubana (Cuban Democratic Action) ($400,000)

Provides assistance and informational materials to political prisoners and their families.

B. Funding so-called independent journalists ($2,028,000)

1. Cuba Free Press ($280,000)

Publishes the work of counter-revolutionary writers and journalists inside Cuba

2. Florida International University ($622,000)

The FIU International Media Center (IMC) trains so-called independent journalists.

3. CubaNet ($833,000)

Provides a comprehensive internet on-line publication of stories provided by Cuba' so-called independent journalists, and other national and international press reports on Cuba.

4. Carta de Cuba ($293,000)

Disseminates internationally and inside Cuba the writing of Cuba's so-called independent journalists.

C. Funding for dissident Cuban NGOs ($1,602,249)

1. Partners of the Americas ($172,000)

Helps establish linkages between emerging Cuban dissident organisations, and other counterpart organisations around the world.

2. Pan American Development Foundation ($553,500)

Establishes linkages between Cuban NGOs and counterpart NGOs operating elsewhere in the Americas. Provides information and material assistance to Cuba's so-called independent librarians.

3. ACDI-VOCA Independent Agricultural Cooperatives ($265,000)

Provides technical information on cooperative development, agriculture and agro-business to dissident NGOs in Cuba.

4. University of Miami : Developing Civil Society ($320,000)

Facilitates access to information and training for Cuban dissidents to form so-called NGOs.

5. Florida International University : NGO development ($291,749)

Trains so-called Cuban NGO leaders in management and delivery of social services.

D. Funding for business lobbyists ($592,575)

1. American Centre for International Labor Solidarity ($168,575)

Works within trade union movements worldwide to persuade them and foreign firms to refuse to recognise Cuba's official trade unions.

2. National Policy Association ($424,000)

Convenes an international private sector working group to encourage companies doing business in Cuba to refuse to recognise Cuba's official trade unions.

E. Distributing subversive information in Cuba ($885,000)

1. Cuba on-line ($800,000)

Transmits information on democracy, human rights and free market economics directly to the Cuban people, through the international mail system, and by electronic means.

2. Sabre Foundation ($85,000)

Donates new books and other informational materials on democratic transition, free market economics and other issues to independent Cuban NGOs and individuals.

F. Preparing for the US takeover of Cuba ($2,132,000)

1. Rutgers University : Planning for Change ($99,000)

Supports planning for future assistance to a Cuban "transition" government.

2. International Foundation for Election Systems ($136,000)

Analyses assistance required to support "transitional elections" in Cuba.

3. US-Cuba Business Council ($852,000)

Surveys US private sector resources and plans to assist the eventual "reconstruction" of the Cuban economy. Otto Reich, Bush's Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs is on its executive board.

4. University of Miami : Cuba Transition Planning ($1,045,000)

Analyzes challenges that will face a future "transition government" in Cuba, including : legal reform, political party formation, privatisation and foreign investment, combating corruption, education reform, economic policy reform, international donor coordination.

G. Evaluation of the programme ($335,000)

1. University of Florida : Measuring Public Opinion ($110,000)

Estimates public opinion, knowledge and attitudes in Cuba through interviews with recent Cuban migrants.

2. Price Waterhouse Coopers, Inc. ($225,000)

Under contract, assesses the effectiveness of the USAID Cuba program. Examines progress and impediments to achieving the program objective.

Grand total of USAID to anti-Castro groups in 2002 : $15,673,995

More than half the money goes to supporting so-called human rights activists and their organisations, many of which are based in Miami, not Cuba. More than $2 million dollars is being spent funding so-called "independent journalists". Hundreds of thousands of dollars are going to the families of anti Castro activists who are in jail. What all this means is that it is very profitable to become a dissident in Cuba. There is a lot of money available for you to live well if you choose. When you get caught and are prosecuted you will then become a prisoner of conscience and another statistic for the US to use in its attack on Cuba for alleged human rights violations. You will also not need to worry because there are plenty of US government funded agencies who will support you in jail and send money to your family.

The best way to find out the truth about what is going on in Cuba - including their library service - is to go there and talk to the Cuban people. The following article, by Rhonda L. Neugebauer, is a brief report on an American Library Association trip to Cuba. Included is a comprehensive list of internet sites in Cuba. The US and the so-called "Friends of Cuban Libraries" (sic) would have us believe that there is no access to the internet in Cuba. In fact, there are many Cuban internet websites and there is a major programme going on in Cuba to make the internet available via schools, libraries and other agencies.

Report on ALA Delegation Trip to Cuba

Rhonda L. Neugebauer, University of California, Riverside
Association of College and Research Libraries
International Relations Committee
June 11, 2002, Atlanta, Georgia

Congreso INFO 2002

This conference was organized by IDICT (http://www.idict.cu/) and several Cuban institutions and organizations. The conference was held April 22-26, 2002. Over 30 US librarians attended, including ALA President John Berry and ALA President-Elect Mitch Freedman. The Conference proceedings were published on CD-ROM and handed to participants at registration. Citation: Congreso Internacional de Informacion, Abril 22-26, 2002. IDICT. Palacio de las Convenciones, La Habana, Cuba.

The ALA delegation met with the Cuban Library Assn. (ASCUBI) and SOCICT (Info and Systems professionals) and held a 1/2 day discussion on cooperation between US and Cuban librarians. The next Conference will be held in April 2004 in Havana. The theme will be "Multidisciplinary, social, and technological integration on a human scale: questions and answers." See website for more information (www.info-congreso.cu).

Upcoming Conference in Cuba, June 9-12, 2003

"Libraries of the Third World" is a conference within the "Culture and Development Conference" sponsored by the Jose Marti National Library and the Public Libraries Network. Topics include: Libraries and the cultural identify of third world countries; national libraries for the defense and preservation of historic memory and bibliographic heritage of nations. For info: Mirtha Padron, Secretaria Ejecutiva super

cubarte.cult.cu; Conference organizer Paula Bravo eva   palco.gep.cma.net

Needs of Cuban Libraries

- Supplies (pens, pencils, paper, paper clips, staples, staplers, tape, glue, alcohol, cotton)
- Equipment (computers, printers, printer cartridges/ribbons, toner, copiers, bookmobiles)
- Books and journals (professional lit, Dewey Decimal Classification, children's books)
- Professional materials (association materials, instruction materials)
- Friends, cooperation and concern

- Stop the embargo

Internet Development In Cuba

"Cuba goes Digital," Nov. 2001 report written by Philip Peters of the Lexington Foundation. Report covers Internet development, telecommunications, information technology education, and business technology, with simplistic analysis. See http://www.lexingtoninstitute.org/cuba/pdf/Cuba_telecom.pdf.

Sample of sophisticated projects, including:

a. Ciencias de la Informacion, textos completes, 1968-2001. Complete run of journal on CD-ROM. Publisher IDICT. ISBN: 959-234-032-3.

b. Wilfredo Lam. "This multimedia title pretends to disseminate the creation of this relevant Cuban artist, showing details of his life, stages of his work, his influence of the principal artistic currents of the first half of the century, as well as the legacy of the teach to Cuban, Caribbean, Latin American and... colorfulness." Producer: Centro de Informatica y Sistemas aplicados a la Cultura, CEISIC.

c. Atlas Etnografico de Cuba. Cultura popular tradicional. Covers "traditional popular culture, in its various material and spiritual forms and expression." Atlas has 13 sections, 238 maps 1246 images, 46 videos, 96 musical fragments and 700 pages of text." I have several copies for sale.

d. Musica popular cubana, origins y actualidad. In English and Spanish. History of popular Cuban music. CD-ROM. Published by CEISIC.

List of Cuban websites prepared by the University of Havana librarians :

Portal Cuba.cu. El portal de Cuba http://www.cuba.cu

Cubaweb. Portal cubano http://www.cubaweb.cu

Islagrande, Portal Cubano http://www.islagrande.cu

InfoCom. La Red de Datos de Mensajería Pública de Cuba http://www.infocom.etecsa.cu TRANSNET. La red del transporte en Cuba http://www.transnet.cu/

Portal de Matanzas http://www.atenas.inf.cu

Camaraco. Portal pinero http://www.gerona.inf.cu

El portal de la filosofía y el pensamiento cubano http://www.filosofia.cu

Portal de Villa Clara http://www.civc.inf.cu

Caonao.Portal de Camagüey http://www.cmw.inf.cu

Portal de Las Tunas http://www.ltunas.inf.cu

Portal de Holguín http://www.holguin.inf.cu

El Portal de la Ciencia en Cuba http://www.cubaciencia.cu

Infomed, Red Telemática de Salud en Cuba http://www.infomed.sld.cu

CUBARTE "El Sitio de la Cultura Cubana" http://www.cubarte.cult.cu

La Pesca y la Marina Mercante http://www1.cubamar.cu

Ciencia y Tecnología Sitio Oficial del Ministerio de Ciencia Tecnología y Medio Ambiente.
http://www.cuba.cu/ciencia/citma/index.htm El Portal de la Ciencia en Cuba http://www.cubaciencia.cu

Academia de Ciencias de Cuba http://www.cuba.cu/ciencia/acc/

Cubatécnica. Empresa de Contratación de Asistencia Técnica http://www.ceniai.inf.cu/CUBATECNICA/
IDICT-Instituto de Información Científica y Tecnlógica de la República de Cuba http://www.idict.cu
CEADEN. Centro de Estudios Aplicados al Desarrollo Nuclear http://www.ceaden.cu Centro de Histoterapia
Placentaria http://www.ceniai.inf.cu/POLO/centros/chp.htm Centro de Inmunología Molecular
http://www.cim.sld.cu

Centro de Investigaciones del Ozono http://www.ozono.cubaweb.cu/

Centro de Ingeniería Genética y Biotecnología http://www.weweb.com/cigb/index_e.html Centro de
Inspección y Control Ambiental http://www1.cuba.cu:8084/ciencia/citma/ama/cica/inicio.html Centro
Internacional de Restauración Neurológica http://www.ciren.cubaweb.cu/

COMBIOMED.Empresa de automatización de equipos médicos http://www.combiomed.com Elfos
Scientiae: Grupo editorial. Biotecnología http://www.elfosscientiae.com.cu/ Instituto de Biotecnología de
las Plantas http://www1.cuba.cu:8084/ciencia/ibp/ Instituto de Cibernética, Matemática y Física

http://www.cuba.cu/ciencia/citma/aid/icimaf/Index.htm

Instituto de Investigaciones Avícolas http://www1.cuba.cu:8084/ciencia/avicultura/ Oficina Cubana de
Propiedad Industrial http://www.ocpi.cu

Instituto de Sanidad Vegetal http://www.cuba.cu/ciencia/inisav/

Instituto de investigaciones en Normalización http://www.cuba.cu/ciencia/normas/ Instituto de
Meteorología de la República de Cuba http://www.met.inf.cu

Instituto de Oceanología http://www.cuba.cu/ciencia/citma/ama/oceanologia/Default.html Museo Nacional
de Historia Natural de Cuba

http://www1.cuba.cu:8084/ciencia/citma/ama/museo/

La ciencia y la tecnica en la capital de Cuba. http://www.anirch.islagrande.cu/ Instituto de
Investigaciones para la Industria Alimenticia (IIIA) http://www.cuba.cu/investigaciones_alimentos/ Red
Solar http://www.cubasolar.cu

Centro de Tecnología Apropiada en Saneamiento.SANITEC. http://www.cuba.cu/sanitec Zoológico
Nacional de Cuba http://www.cuba.cu/ciencia/citma/ama/pzn/pzn.htm

Seguridad http://www.seguridad.cu

Complejo Las Terrazas.Turismo de Naturaleza http://www8.lasterrazas.cu/indexie.htm Instituto de
Ecología y Sistemática http://www.cuba.cu/ciencia/citma/ama/ecologia Centro de Información, Gestión y
Educación Ambiental (CIGEA) http://www.cuba.cu/ciencia/CIGEA/index.html Centro de Convenciones.
Capitolio de La Habana http://www.cuba.cu/cultura/capitolio/Caphome.html Arte CUBARTE "El Sitio de la
Cultura Cubana" http://www.cubarte.cult.cu/

Islagrande, Portal Cubano. Arte http://www.islagrande.cu/sitios.asp?IdCateg=156 1-2-3 y... Portal de
Música Cubana http://www.123y.islagrande.cu/

Conjunto Escultórico Memorial "Comandante Ernesto Che Guevara"
http://www.cult.cu/patrim/cnpc/museos/che/default.html Oficina del Historiador de la Ciudad de La
Habana http://www.ohch.cu

Sitio Oficial de La Camerata Romeu http://www.ohch.cu

Producciones ABDALA S.A. http://www.abdala.cu/

Casa de las Américas http://www.cult.cu/casa/indice.html

Instituto Cubano del Libro http://www.cult.cu/libro/icl/index.html

Unión de Artistas y Escritores de Cuba. UNEAC http://www.cubarte.cult.cu/uneac/index.html Fondo Cubano de Bienes Culturales http://www.infocex.cu/fcbc/

Centro Cultural Pablo de la Torriente Brau http://www.cubarte.cult.cu/cptb/nmain.htm Sitio del Ballet Nacional de Cuba http://www.balletcuba.cu

Cine Cubano http://www.cinecubano.cu/

CUBAONLINE: Conocer y disfrutar las maravillas de Cuba. http://www.cubaonline.com.cu Biblioteca Nacional "José Martí" http://www.binanet.lib.cult.cu

Centro de Informática Aplicada a la Cultura (CEISIC)

http://http://www.ceisic.caribbeansources.com

Centro de Desarrollo de Artes Visuales http://www.cubarte.cult.cu/plastica/index.html Centro de Desarrollo y Comunicación Cultural (CREART) http://www.cubarte.cult.cu/noticias/creart/index.html Centro de Estudios Martianos http://www.cubarte.cult.cu/marti/index.html

Fundación del Nuevo Cine Latinoamericano http://www.cubarte.cult.cu/fncl/index.html Fundación Fernando Ortiz http://www.cubarte.cult.cu/ffo/index.html

Teatro Nacional de Cuba http://www.cubarte.cult.cu/Teatro/teatro.htm

Memorial José Martí http://www.cuba.cu/memorial/index.shtml

Cinemateca de Cuba http://www.cinecubano.cu/cinema.htm

Academia de Artes Plásticas "San Alejandro" http://www.cubarte.cult.cu/instit/insta.html#INS_084 Agrupación Cubana de Arte Circense y Variedades (CIRCUBA) http://www.cubarte.cu/artesesc/cnae.circuba.html Medios de Comunicación

Granma. Órgano Oficial del Partido Comunista de Cuba http://www.granma.cubaweb.cu/ Granma Internacional Digital http://www.granma.cu/

Juventud Rebelde Digital http://www.jrebelde.cubaweb.cu/

Trabajadores http://www.trabajadores.cubaweb.cu/

CUBAHORA. Cuba en Noticias http://www.cuba.cu/CUBAHORA/

El Economista de Cuba. http://www.eleconomista.cubaweb.cu/

Tribuna de la Habana http://www.tribuna.islagrande.cu/

Victoria. Municipio Isla de la Juventud http://www.gerona.inf.cu/prensa/

Girón. Provincia Matanzas http://www.giron.co.cu/

Vanguardia. Provincia Villa Clara http://vanguardia.co.cu/

5 de Septiembre. Provincia Cienfuegos http://www.5septiembre.cu/

Escambray. Provincia Sancti Spíritus http://www.escambray.islagrande.cu/Esp/Default.htm Invasor. Provincia Ciego de Avila http://www.invasor.islagrande.cu/

Adelante. Provincia Camagüey http://www.cmw.inf.cu/adelante/

26. Provincia Las Tunas http://www.ltunas.inf.cu/26/index.htm

Ahora. Provincia Holguín http://www.ahora.cu/

Sierra Maestra. Provincia Santiago de Cuba http://www.sierramaestra.cu/

AIN. Agencia de Información Nacional http://www.ain.cubaweb.cu/

Prensa Latina. Agencia Informativa Latinoamericana http://www.prensa-latina.cu/ Radio Reloj - Emisora http://www.radioreloj.cu

Radio Habana Cuba- Emisora http://www.radiohc.cu/

Cubavision Internacional http://www.cubavision.cubaweb.cu/

El nuevo Fénix http://www.fenix.islagrande.cu/

NotiNet del Cubaweb http://www.fenix.islagrande.cu/

Radio Rebelde http://www.cuba.cu/RRebelde

Radio Metropolitana http://www.metropolitana.islagrande.cu

Radio Ciudad Habana http://www.mihabana.islagrande.cu

Radio Victoria http://www.ltunas.inf.cu

Radio Sancti Spíritus http://www.escambray.islagrande.cu/CMHT

Radio CMHW Villa Clara http://www.cmhw.esivc.colombus.cu

Opciones http://www.opciones.cubaweb.cu

Caimán Barbudo http://www.caimanbarbudo.cu

Revista Bohemia http://www.cuba.cu/BOHEMIA/

Cuba Internacional http://www.prensa-latina.cu

Revista Somos Jóvenes http://www.somosjovenes.cu

Revista Juventud Técnica http://www.juventudtecnica.cu

Revista Pionero http://www.pionero.cu

Revista Zunzún http://www.zunzun.cu

Revista Alma Mater http://www.almamater.cu

Revista Mujeres http://www.mujeres.cubaweb.cu

Revista Tricontinental http://www.tricontinental.cubaweb.cu

Revista Revolución y Cultura http://www.cubarte.cult.cu/publi/revcult/index.html Gaceta de Cuba http://www.cubarte.cult.cu/publi/gaceta/index.html

Temas http://www.cubarte.cult.cu/publi/temas/index.html

Revista Prismas http://www.prensa-latina/Pubs/prisma

Revista Orbe http://www.prensa-latina/Pubs/orbe

Revista Avances Médicos http://www.prensa-latina/Pubs/avances

Revista deportiva cubana:Marcas http://www.prensa-latina/Pubs/marcas

Viajes y Turismo Directorio Turístico de Cuba http://www.dtcuba.com/esp/default.asp Cocoweb. Dirección electrónica para responder preguntas sobre Cuba

http://www.dtcuba.com/esp/cocoweb/default.asp

Cubana de Aviación ......Puerta de Cuba al Mundo......

http://www.granma.cubaweb.cu/

Paradiso, promotora de turismo cultural http://www.ceniai.inf.cu/PARADISO/

Servimed. Turismo de Salud http://www.cubanacan.cu/servimed/servimed.html#info

ASISTUR http://www8.asistur.cubaweb.cu/esp/index.htm

Caribe International Tours S.A http://www.caribeintours.com

Hoteles Super Club http://www.superclubs.cubaweb.cu

Centro Internacional de Salud La Pradera http://www.cuba.cu/PRADERA

Cadena Habaguanex http://www.dtcuba.com/esp/hoteles.asp?id=3&cod=8&name=Habaguanex Cadena Islazul http://www.dtcuba.com/esp/hoteles.asp?id=3&cod=11&name=Islazul

CUBAMAR. Camping y Villas cercanas a la Naturaleza http://www.cubamar.cubaweb.cu/ Grupo Cubanacan http://www.cubanacan.cu/index.html

Grupo Gaviota http://www.gaviota.cubaweb.cu/index.asp

Hoteles Horizontes http://www.horizontes.cu/

Grupo Hotelero Gran Caribe http://www.grancaribe.cubaweb.cu/

Marinas Gaviota http://www.gaviota.cubaweb.cu/espannol/marinas/index.html

Marinas Puertosol http://www.puertosol.cubaweb.cu/

Sol Meliá en Cuba http://www.cubaweb.cu/solmelia/default.htm

Cubanacan. Agencia de Viajes http://www.cubanacan.cu/agencia/servagencia.html

Cuba Travel. Agencia de Viajes http://www.cuba-travel.com.mx/

EASY TRAVEL inc. Agencia de Viajes http://www.easytravel.cu/

Gaviota Tours. Agencia de Viajes

http://www.gaviota.cubaweb.cu/espannol/gaviotatour/index.html

GOCUBA. Agencia de Viajes http://www.gocuba.com/

TRAVELNET.Agencia de Viajes http://www.travelnet.cu/

TRANSTURTAXIONLINE http://www.transturtaxionline.cu/home.htm

Viñales Tours. Agencia de Viajes http://www.spin.com.mx/vinales/

Complejo Las Terrazas http://www8.lasterrazas.cu/indexie.htm

Sitio Oficial de VIAZUL, transporte por ómnibus http://www.viazul.cu/PARADISO/

CUBACAR. Renta de Autos http://www.cubacar.cubanacan.cu/

PANATRANS. Renta de Autos http://www.cuba.cu/turismo/panatrans/

VIA. Renta de Autos http://www.gaviota.cubaweb.cu/espannol/rentcar/index.html

Internet y computación CITMATEL. Empresa de Tecnologías de la Información y Servicios Telemáticos http://www.citmatel.inf.cu/ CeniaInternet. Proveedor #1 de los Servicios de Internet en Cuba http://www.ceniai.inf.cu/ CUBA-NIC-Mapa del Sitio http://www.nic.cu/

ColombusNet. Nodo principal de la RED privada del SIME.

http://www.islagrande.cu/colombusnet/

Infomaster. Fuerza informática de las universidades cubanas http://www.ifmaster.com/ GET. División del Grupo de la Electrónica para el Turismo

http://www8.cubaweb.cu/teledatos/index.htm

InfoCom. Proveedor de Internet de ETECSA http://www.infocom.etecsa.cu/

TRANSNET. La red del transporte en Cuba http://www.transnet.cu/

Genesis Multimedia. Discos Compactos Multimedia

http://www.genesis.caribbeansources.com/genesis.htm

SoftCal. Soluciones informáticas de alto nivel http://www.softcal.cubaweb.cu

Softel. Software, desarrollo y comercialización http://www.softel.cu/

CEDISAP. Centro de Desarrollo Informático de Salud Pública http://www.cedisap.sld.cu COMBIOMED. Automatización de equipos médicos y la industria.

http://www.www.combiomed.com/

CUBASITIOS http://www.cubasitios.cu/

Corporación Copextel S.A http://www.copextel.com.cu/Sp/index.asp

Economía y negocios Ministerio de Finanzas y Precios http://www1.cuba.cu:8004/economia/finanzas/
Infocex. Información para el Comercio Exterior de Cuba http://www.infocex.cu

Bazar Cuba http://home.citmatel.inf.cu/bazarcuba/index.html

Corporación Cubalse http://www.cuba.cu/economia/cubalse

CUBACEL http://www.cubalse.com

EMPROSIME.Servicios de Ingienería http://www.emprosime.cu

Aseguradora del Turismo. La Isla S.A http://www.cuba.cu/laisla/

Cámara de Comercio http://www.camaracuba.cu

Empresa del seguro estatal nacional. http://www.esen.com.cu/

Ley de Inversiones Extranjeras en Cuba http://gopher://gopher.ceniai.inf.cu:70/0./Linvext/linvesp.gz
Decreto-Ley de Zonas Francas y Parques Industriales http://www.cuba.cu/negocios/DL165E.htm La Pesca
y la Marina Mercante http://www1.cubamar.cu

Corporación CIMEX http://www.cimex.cu

Grupo COMbELL. Industria del Calzado en Cuba http://www.combell.com.cu

La Corporación COPEXTEL, S.A http://www.copextel.com.cu

CEPEC. Centro para la promoción de las exportaciones de Cuba http://www.infocex.cu/cepec Motores
internacionales del Caribe, S.A http://www.micsa.cubaweb.cu

Educación La Educación Superior en Cuba http://www.mes.edu.cu

Universidad de La Habana http://www.uh.cu

CEJISOF http://www.cuba.cu/educacion/cejisof

Universidad de Oriente http://www.uo.edu.cu/default.html

Instituto Superior Politécnico "José Antonio Echeverría" http://www.ispjae.cu

Universidad de Matanzas "Camilo Cienfuegos" http://www.atenas.inf.cu/Universidad/HPage.htm
Universidad Pedagógica de Camagüey "José Martí"

http://www.cuba.cu/educacion/cejisoft/index.html

Posgrado en Cuba http://www.posgrado.cu

Infomaster. Fuerza informática de las universidades cubanas http://www.ifmaster.com Universidad
Virtual. Ciencia y Tecnología http://www.cursosenlinea.cu

Universidad Virtual. Salud http://www.infomed.sld.cu/uvirtual

Universidad Central "Martha Abreu" de Las Villas http://www.uclv.etecsa.cu/disenno/present.asp
Biblioteca Nacional José Martí http://binanet.lib.cult.cu

Grupo de Intercambio Científico Educacional (ICE) http://www.cuba.cu/educacion/me Medicina Infomed,
Red Telemática de Salud en Cuba http://www.infomed.sld.cu

Centro de Histoterapia Placentaria http://www.histoterapia-placentaria.cu

Centro de Ingeniería Genética y Biotecnología http://www.weweb.com/cigb/index_e.html Centro Internacional de Retinosis Pigmentaria " Camilo Cienfuegos"

http://www.sld.cu/instituciones/retinosis/indice.html

CIREN. Centro Internacional de Restauración Neurológica http://www.ciren.cubaweb.cu Clínica Central Cira García. Atención médica a extranjeros

http://www.infomed.sld.cu/webs/cirag/index.html

Clínica Internacional de Ozonoterapia http://www.ozono.cubaweb.cu/iclinica.htm

Hospital "Frank País" http://www.sld.cu/instituciones/pais/

Instituto Finlay. Investigación y producción de vacunas

http://www.sld.cu/instituciones/finlay/indice.html

Instituto "Pedro Kourí" de Medicina Tropical http://www1.cuba.cu:8084/salud/ipk/ SIGEMEC - Sitio de Genética Médica Cubana http://www.infomed.sld.cu/webs/geneti/index.html CECAM Centro de Cibernética Aplicada a la Medicina

http://www.infomed.sld.cu/webs/cecam/index.html

CEDISAP. Centro de Desarrollo Informático de Salud Pública http://www.cedisap.sld.cu COMBIOMED. Automatización de equipos médicos y la industria. http://www.combiomed.com Política y gobierno Sitio del Gobierno de la República de Cuba http://www.cubagob.cu Aduana General de la República. http://www.aduana.islagrande.cu

Cámara de Comercio http://www.camaracuba.cubaweb.cu

Constitución de la República http://www2.cuba.cu/gobierno/consti.htm

Ministerio de Ciencia Tecnología y Medio Ambiente

http://www.ceniai.inf.cu/ciencia/citma/index.htm

Ministerio de Educación Superior http://www.mes.edu.cu

Ministerio de Finanzas y Precios http://www1.cuba.cu:8084/economia/finanzas

La Pesca y la Marina Mercante http://www1.cubamar.cu

Sitio del Partido Comunista de Cuba http://www1.cuba.cu:8084/politica/webpcc

Sección de Discursos e Intervenciones del Comandante en Jefe Fidel Castro Ruz

http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/index.html

Cuba Vs Bloqueo http://www.cubavsbloqueo.cu

Cuba Demanda. Pueblo de Cuba Vs Gobierno de USA http://www.cubademanda.cu

Deportes CUBADEPORTES S.A. Expriencia de Campeones. CUBA

http://www.ceniai.inf.cu/deportes/cubadep/index.html

Sitio del Ajedrez en Cuba http://www.cuba.cu/ajedrez/isla.html

Mansión Xanadú. Casa del golf cubano http://www.golfvaradero.cu

Javier Sotomayor http://www8.granma.cu/sotomayor/index.html

Bases náuticas Cubamar http://www8.cubamar.cubaweb.cu/

Varadero Golf Club http://www.golfvaradero.cu

Resolution on the Destruction of Palestinian Libraries, Archives, and Other Cultural Institutions

WHEREAS, In the course of recent events in the Middle East, Palestinian computers, photocopiers, books, audio recordings, video recordings, data, institutional archives and records, and objects of historical, cultural, and artistic importance were destroyed; and

WHEREAS, The destruction of these cultural resources represents a significant loss for the Palestinian people and the world; and

WHEREAS, Palestinian libraries and cultural institutions are urgently in need of restoration and assistance; and

WHEREAS, The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) deplores the destruction of library and cultural resources anywhere in the world; and, therefore the destruction of these library and cultural resources; and

WHEREAS, IFLA met in Jerusalem in 2000 and met with Palestinian librarians and established a working relationship of cooperation; and, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That CILIP calls upon the British government, as well as other governments, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to prevent further destruction of libraries and cultural resources and to provide material assistance for the reconstruction and restoration of these resources; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That CILIP take leadership in recommending that IFLA establish a study group on Palestinian libraries and cultural institutions, and establish a mechanism for providing assistance to Palestinian libraries and cultural institutions; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the International Office of CILIP is hereby charged with implementing this resolution.

This resolution has been submitted to CILIP. It is based on a resolution which was adopted by the Council of the American Library Association on 19 June 2002.

For enquiries contact
http://libr.org/isc

Information for Social Change

"an activist organisation that examines issues of censorship, freedom and ethics amongst library and information workers..."

ISC 15. Feedback on Globalisation and Information issue of ISC

Ruth Rikowski

I have received a lot of positive feedback about the 'Globalisation and Information' issue. Some examples are given below.

Susan George, the internationally renowned author of books such as The Debt Boomerang and A Fate worse than Debt, was very appreciative and said she would use the 'Globalisation and Information' issue gratefully. She is also the Vice-President of ATTAC, France. The acronym 'ATTAC' is French and in English means the 'Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions for the Aid of Citizens'. It now has about 40,000 members and has groups all over Europe and in some other countries as well. It looks for alternatives to the 'dogmatic ideology of neoliberalism' and campaigns on issues such as Third World Debt, the reform or abolition of the WTO and wants to 'recapture the space that has been lost to the financial world'. (http://www.attac.org/uk/attac/html/about.vm).

Dr Shahrzad Mojab, Associate Professor in the Department of Education at the University of Toronto, really liked the issue, and asked for extra copies so that they could use it for their teaching.

Mark Rosenzweig, the ALA Councillor at large and one of the editors of Progressive Librarians Guild was very enthusiastic, and even mentioned the possibility of the issue being turned into a book. He praised, in particular, my long, analytical article.

Mark Perkins, Librarian, New Caledonia, South Pacific said that it was an 'excellent issue' and that librarians in New Caledonia did not know anything about these GATS issues before, and only now just realised that New Caledonia had 'opted in' to the 'Recreational, Cultural and Sporting Services'.

Maureen Sawa, Co-ordinator, Childrens and Young Adult Services, Kitchener Public Library, Kitchener read the ISC issue and said:

> This is great...I'm just reading the Clare Joy article, for example - would be very helpful reading for CLA types.

Subsequent to this, a link was added from the CLA (Canadian Library Association) GATS tool kit to the Globalisation and Information issue. Paul Whitney, the Chief Librarian of Burnaby Public Library, British Columbia, Canada and IFLA representative to the WTO Seattle Ministerial and past president of CLA and Frode Bakken, the President of the Norwegian Library Association and co-ordinator of the EBLIDA WTO Working Group, were both very praiseworthy of the issue. Leading on from this, they will both be speaking at the fringe meeting that I am organising at IFLA conference in Glasgow.

Anders Erison, a freelance journalist and former librarian from Norway was also very interested in the issue, and the other work that I have been undertaking on the GATS. He plans to come to England in September, when he will explore these issues further within the context of the GATS, privatisation and commercialisation of libraries in England. Within this context he will be interviewing me.

David Creighton, of the Ottawa Chapter of the Council of Canadians, was interested in the issue and asked me for further information about it. The Council of Canadians is a highly respected national organisation with over 100,000 members across Canada. Its focus is on the retention of Canada's sovereignty. Peter Hudis, editor of News and Letters found it interesting. Clare Joy said that the issue was "very comprehensive".

Marta Aguilera from Dpto. Desarrollo de Colecciones, Biblioteca nacional "Jose Marti", La Habana, Cuba asked for a copy of the issue, saying that it would be very useful for them, as a National Library in a developing country.

A librarian working at the World Trade Organisation library asked for a copy, so that it could be added to the library collection.

Capital and Class, a left-wing refereed, academic journal said that they would like an advertising exchange - whereby they would advertise the ISC 'Globalisation and Information' special issue in the next copy of Capital and Class and we would advertise Capital and Class in next ISC issue. This has now been arranged. See the advert at the end of this issue.

Further comments

I also received compliments and considerable interest from many other people - some of which originated from the radio programme and/or my article in Managing Information, and/or from one of the news items about the issue in the LA Record. One lady who heard me on the radio programme, for example, said:

"I appreciate your giving me the opportunity to find out more information on this issue. I try to keep up-to-date on national and European legislation that affects or will affect the cultural/heritage sector, but the GATS issue was new to me"

Another lady also said that this was something that she had not been aware of before, but now that I had drawn it to her attention, she had seen quite a lot of references to it. Another person said that they wanted to include some information about all this in their Chartership report for CILIP and asked for copies of the various other papers that I have written on the subject, saying that they would include me in the acknowledgements of their report. A few people, including someone from the Friends of Libraries movement responded with interest to the news items in the LA Record about the BBC Radio 4 programme that I was on, and asked me for a copy of the tape transcription of the programme. Further information about the Friends of Libraries movement can be found at the following websites - www.librarycampaign.co.uk and www.londonlibrary.org.uk.

Rob Blejerveld, editor of WTO.ZIP in the Netherlands, read my article in Managing Information with interest, and then asked for articles from the ISC issue on GATS and libraries. These are just examples of some of the types of responses that I have received.

Links to websites

The issue has been posted to lots of different websites. These include:

a. Library Juice, with links to all the individual articles (Library Juice is edited by Rory Litwin);

b. Sustainable Development International http://www.sustdev.org/industry.news/032002/18.02.shtml

c.Norweld Regional Library systems http://www.norweld.lib.oh.us/norweldnews/viewer.asp?ID=1056 ;

d.Booksurfer http://216.239.37.100/search?q=cache:OZ1K5ZBRGi8C:booksurfer.blogspot.com/2002

e. MAI-NOT Forum at: http://mai.flora.org/forum/35403

f. Global Campaign Webliography (which included a reference to my article about the Internet and micropayments) at: http://members.iinet.net.au/mjenks/anddocs.html

g. ACME Bookbinding at: http://216.239.37.100/search?
q=cache:A3WRNtqb51C:www.acmebook.com/22002/02/ .

h. David Little.org.uk Weblog - Weblog is a small selection of resources on the Web that David Little likes. Arranged in broad categories. http://www.david-little.org.uk/weblog/

Other individuals/groups showing an interest

There are many other people who have shown an interest one way or another. This has either been directly through reading the issue; or indirectly through attending one of my talks on GATS and libraries; reading my article in Managing Information; hearing me on the radio and/or reading the tape transcription; seeing one of the news items in the LA Record or interested in attending the IFLA fringe meeting, which I am currently organising. These come from a wide variety of backgrounds, including:

a. the library/information world (including some of the book reviewers for Managing Information and some members of the Diversity Council and the Library Campaign

b. Universities , such as Sussex University, Oxford University and Glasgow University

c. the Green Party

d. the anti-globalisation movement in general

e. the media (e.g. the Big Issue, Red Pepper)

f. left-wing academics/intellectuals

g. students

h. organisations such as People and Planet (a student organisation);the World Development Movement; ATTAC, London ; Friends of Le Monde Diplomatique ; and the Communist Party

i. Chris Keene, Bob Olsen and David Western - who all circulate anti-globalisation information and information from a critical perspective round to many people on different email lists. They have all circulated a large amount of information that I have sent them, which I am very appreciative of.

For enquiries contact
http://libr.org/isc

Information for Social Change

"an activist organisation that examines issues of censorship, freedom and ethics amongst library and information workers..."

ISC 15. What does the future hold for our public libraries?

by Ruth Rikowski

On almost a daily basis we read in our newspapers about the part privatisation of different public service sectors - particularly in relation to schools and hospitals.

However, we do not find anything in the media about the privatisation of our libraries. Why is this? Is it because they are 'safe'- the last bastion of a civilised society? The public library - so often seen as a haven, a place that offers a sense of well-being, a community centre, a safe place, an exhibition centre, a place to read, think, discover, learn and explore different ideas. There can surely be no place where a sense of sharing is more powerful - borrowing books, returning books, the community sharing books, stories information and knowledge. But is the public library 'safe' in reality? Sadly not.

These are the issues that I address in an article that I wrote entitled The corporate takeover of libraries, for a special issue of Information for Social Change on the theme of Globalisation and Information, 2001-02 (which I was also the editor of). I begin with an historical analysis of public libraries in England, and show how England arrived at the free public library service that we take so much for granted today. I then show how our public libraries are now under threat because of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) that is being formulated at the World Trade Organisation (WTO). There is not space to consider this in any depth here, but I discuss the meaning of 'services' in terms of the GATS and whether our public libraries do, or are likely to fall under the GATS definition of 'services'. I show how the lack of clarity in the GATS document in regard to this means that it is quite possible that libraries will fall under the GATS - indeed, they already are. This is the logic of the GATS and the lack of clarity is, at least, convenient for those with a marketising agenda. (Rikowski, 2001a and 2001b)

In what ways, then, our are public libraries changing? The corporate takeover of libraries can be placed under three main categories - commercialisation, privatisation and capitalisation. Various examples of commercialisation can be given, but the obvious one is income generation. This has been taking place for a number of years in our public libraries. It includes selling items such as postcards, memorabilia, bookmarks, pens and other stationery items. Certain items are also hired out for a fee, such as videos, cassettes and CDs. Another example is market research - trying to predict library users want and needs; or more accurately 'consumers'. Under the marketisation agenda (following the logic of the GATS) people become 'consumers'. Southwark is using a library computer system called Talis, for example, in order to generate information that will help them to identify the characteristics of their library users and predict their future needs. Weiss in the Library Association Record, Aug 2000, reports on this, and notes how the information could be added to their library borrowers' card and Southwark could use it in a similar way to which Sainsburys uses its loyalty card. Micropayments is another area. For some time now, various parties have been trying to think of ways in which money can be made from searching and undertaking transactions on the Internet. Micropayments is seen to be the solution. This means that people pay small amounts of money (which could be as little as 0.1p) for undertaking transactions on the Internet. There have been various problems, though, in regard to bringing in Micropayments, such as security and trust. However, the White Paper on Micropayments drafted by StorageTek (2001) says that most of these problems have now been overcome, and that various options are now being set in place to make it easy for people to pay. If this were to become a reality, it would have significant implications for libraries. Through the Peoples' Network more and more public libraries are having computers installed and in ever-greater numbers - they are all getting 'wired up' to the Internet. So, this would presumably mean that

libraries would also have to pay for undertaking transactions on the Internet – otherwise they would be seen to be a 'special case' which could go against the logic of the GATS. Thus, we witness the extension of the commercialisation of our libraries. The method in which library services would be required to pay would obviously need to be carefully thought out, but this is the direction in which things are moving.

Privatisation can be broken down into 3 main areas. First, is where private companies are running libraries (or parts of libraries) directly, for profit. There are some subscription libraries that would fall under this category. There are also company libraries that function to augment the capacity of the firm to make profits (e.g. libraries in law firms) and media libraries that generate revenue (e.g. newspaper libraries). However, there are also, significantly, examples of corporate capital moving into public sector libraries and electronic libraries setting up in competition with mainstream public and academic libraries, operating on a for-profit basis. Some IT centres/IT projects have been set up in public libraries by private companies. Ormes (1996) described how an Internet project called Cybercity was set up in Bath Central Library, for example, which provided the public with PCs and Internet access. The council could not afford to run the project, so it was run, for profit, by a local company called GlobalInternet. Input/Output is another company that has worked with public libraries across the country. Marylebone Library was the first of these. As well as providing Internet access, it also provided access to software packages such as word processing and spreadsheets and ran computer-training courses. Questia, net Library and ebrary are all examples of electronic libraries, (Crane, 2001; Fox, 2001). Questia, for example, is an Internet company aimed at serving students in an academic environment, providing online information from books, encyclopaedias and journals in the humanities and social sciences.

The second form of privatisation is where private companies make a profit out of running libraries at a lower cost than the price they are contracted to run them. This has just started to happen in England, in the London Borough of Haringey (LA Record, 2001c). Haringey received a very negative report by the Best Value Inspectors and this has resulted in Instant Library Ltd, under its co-founder Diana Edmunds, being given the 'opportunity' to turn Haringey library service round. They are on a 6-months trial, but if they are 'successful' I am sure that they will be allowed to continue running Haringey. Once one company is seen to be 'successful', then this will pave the way, and enable other companies to 'move into' our public libraries. Why was it that Haringey council was not given the opportunity to improve under Best Value; why were they not given better guidance? Haringey was one of the first councils to do a Best Value review and so were 'guinea pigs' in this respect. So, surely they should have been given extra assistance. But this would not have paved the way for a marketising agenda. It would not have enabled the private sector to make inroads into our public libraries. It needs to be noted that this is not a criticism of Instant Library Ltd itself - indeed it might help to provide Haringey with a good library service. The essential point to note is the fact that it has to make a profit, in a way that a local authority is not compelled to. Private companies, with the best will in the world, are not in a position to place the needs of the people in the local community above the need to make a profit.

The third form of privatisation is where the private sector takes over and runs capital projects, such as the building of a new central library or a service-wide ICT system. The Private Finance Initiative (PFI) comes under this category, and there are various examples of where PFI has been adopted in libraries. The first PFI to incorporate construction and IT solutions was undertaken in Bournemouth (Sibthorpe, 2001). It provided Bournemouth with a new central library and ICT facilities across its whole branch network. A 30-year contract between the Council and Information Resources (Bournemouth) Ltd was signed to build and facility-manage a new central library. There are other examples of PFI in libraries. Hackney Technology Learning Centre, which includes a new central library and museum, has used the PFI initiative to build its new library, which is due to open in April 2002. Kent County Council is operating a PFI contract for the provision, financing and operation of the council's IT system. This includes the library system and a public information network of over 1000 terminals. Brighton is also developing a new central library through PFI. (LA Record, 2000b, LA Record 2001a)

Finally, there is capitalisation. Capitalisation is a process that deepens over time, with libraries becoming sites for capital accumulation and profit making. The other two processes - commercialisation and privatisation - feed off each other such that libraries and library services become increasingly commodified and then capitalised. This implies that library services are increasingly ruled by the goal of profit making. Notions of income generation, income streams, marketing, library products, the user as

'customer' or 'consumer' and the market, competition and cost-effectiveness and efficiency become the yardsticks for success. This implies a 'culture change' regarding the ways library staff are encouraged to view what they are about. The capitalisation of libraries implies its businessification - the library and library services as businesses, bathed in business values and outlooks. Continual library reviews provide examples of the way in which this process has been working. The public library service in the London Borough of Newham has undergone two library reviews, for example and the first review resulted in the loss of a large number of professional librarians. Many other authorities have also undergone reviews.

These three categories, then, commercialisation, privatisation and capitalisation, together constitute a 'corporate takeover' of our public services. I have focused on libraries in this short article, but the model could be applied and adopted to other service sectors, because this is the reality in terms of where we are headed. However, this is not happening in abstraction from the GATS, as many people seem to believe, but is happening precisely because of the GATS.

There are also mechanisms that enable the GATS to take effect - these can be seen to be the national faces of the GATS. One example is the Best Value regime itself, which is encouraging a marketising agenda. As Angela Watson (2001) says in the Best Returns document on Best Value - "Under Best Value retaining library services in-house can only be justified where the authority demonstrates that there really are no other more efficient and effective ways of delivering the quality of service required. Library authorities should explore potential future providers and take steps to encourage them - to create a climate for competition that will enable the market to develop." (Section 5, para 5.1). Another example is Library Standards. There was a standard for qualified staff in the draft document (LA Record, 2000a), but this was removed in the final document (LA Record, 2001b). Now, services only have to show in their Annual Library Plans that they are employing "appropriate" numbers of qualified staff. To any professional librarian this would seem bizarre, but all becomes clear if we refer back to the GATS document itself, where it says that: "Wherever appropriate, recognition should be based on multilaterally agreed criteria. In appropriate cases Members shall work in co-operation with relevant inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations towards the establishment and adoption of common international standards and criteria for recognition and common international standards for the practice of relevant service trades and professions." (WTO, 1994, Article 7 of the GATS). Note that it does not say which members, and it is highly likely that corporations would have a large voice than other bodies. Furthermore, there is no mention of professional bodies having a voice at all. Where no such international standards exist then existing qualifications could be deemed to be a 'barrier to trade', if corporations are denied access to libraries on qualifications grounds. If a foreign supplier took over one of our public library services, for example, and brought staff with them from their own country, these staff might not have the requisite British library qualifications (or their equivalent). Not allowing such staff to work in this particular public library service could be interpreted as a 'barrier to trade'.

Finally, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) and other library associations are very concerned about the WTO/GATS agenda for libraries and how this is likely to shape the future of our libraries. IFLA says: "There is growing evidence that WTO decisions, directly or indirectly, may adversely affect the operations and future development of library services, especially in not-for-profit institutions." (IFLA, 2001) The British Columbia Library Association (BCLA) says simply: "Imagine a world without libraries - it could happen." And the Canadian Library Association (CLA) says that: "Privatization of libraries may result from the proposals for expansion of the GATS Agreement" (1999). Various other library associations have expressed similar concerns.

If we want to ensure that we retain our free public library service then we need to think about all this very carefully. We then need to think of ways in which we can change the tide, to ensure that our public libraries remain free and open to all, regardless of "age, religion, physical and mental health, social status, race, gender or language." (IFLA)

Further information on this subject can be obtained on the Information for Social Change (ISC) website at http://libr.org/ISC/TOC.html. ISC is an organisation that is in liaison with the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP).

Ruth Rikowski was on the BBC Radio 4 'You and Yours' programme last October, which discussed the

GATS, where she considered the likely implications of the GATS for libraries and information. She is the editor of the special ISC issue on Globalisation and Information, Winter 2001-02 and is the Book Reviews Editor for Managing Information.

References

BCLA (und) Imagine a world without libraries - it could happen... the British Columbia Library Association, Vancouver, at: http://www.vcn.bc.ca/bcla-ip/globalization/wtothreat.html (Undated: accessed at 15th August 2001).

Crane, Gregory (2001) Commercial digital libraries and the academic community D-Lib magazine, January, Vol. 7, No 1 http://www.dlib.org/dlib/january01/crane/01crane.html

Fox, Megan (2001) Questia, and the for-profit online library trend Simmons College Libraries Newsletter, Spring 2001. http://w ww.simmons.edu //resources/libraries/LibNewsletter

IFLA (2001) The IFLA position on the WTO treaty negotiations, International Federation of Library Associations & Institutions, version II, September (previous version was February 2001), at: http://www.ifla.org/III//clm/p1/wto-ifla.htm

LA Record (2000a) Standards make hearts beat faster (Public Libraries), a news item in Library Association Record, August, vol.102 no.8, p.426.

LA Record (2000b) PFI Library First, a news item in Library Association Record, October, vol.102 no.10, p.545.

LA Record (2001a) Hackney turns the corner - public libraries, a news item in Library Association Record, February, vol.103 no.2, p.67.

LA Record (2001b) More demands fall on staff: public library standards, a news item in Library Association Record, March, vol.103 no.3, p.131.

LA Record (2001c) Consultants move in (public libraries), a news item in Library Association Record, September, vol.103 no.9, p.515.

Ormes, Sarah (1996) Public libraries corner: commercial partnerships in the public library, Ariadne, Issue 5, September, at: http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue5/public-libraries/

Rikowski, Ruth (2001a) GATS: private affluence and public squalor? Implications for libraries and information, Managing Information, Dec, Vol. 8, No. 10, pp.8-10

Rikowski, Ruth (2001b) The corporate takeover of libraries, Information for Social Change, No. 14, Winter 2001/02

Sibthorpe, Ritchie (2001) A new path to follow - Private Finance Initiative, Library Association Record, April, vol.103 no.4, pp.236-237.

Storage Tek (2001) Miocropayments: making net profits - a Storage Tek perspective, White Paper on Miropayments, Woking: Storage Technology Corporation, UK

Watson, Angela (2001) Best Returns: Best Value Guidance for Local Authorities in England, 2nd Edition, July, at: http://www.la-hq.org.uk/directory/prof-issues/br.html

Weiss, Helen (2000) Tracking usage patterns: how management information systems can help librarians adapt commercial marketing techniques to revolutionise their services, Library Association Record, August, Vol. 102, No, 8, pp.448-449

WTO (1994) General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), World Trade Organisation, at

Information for Social Change

"an activist organisation that examines issues of censorship, freedom and ethics amongst library and information workers..."

ISC 15. The best ideas for operating profitably in a hyper-competitive world

by Jimmie T. Boyett and Joseph H. Boyett, New York: John Wiley, 2001, Introduction - vii-xiv; 418pp; includes diagrams

Reviewed by Ruth Rikowski

Perhaps, unbeknown to the authors, this is an illuminating book. It provides insights into the direction in which we are all being pushed - within this latest version of capitalism. It also provides many facts to substantiate the arguments that are presented by the authors. It focuses on areas such as globalization, the knowledge economy, knowledge management and e-commerce (there is a chapter on each of these topics). These can all be seen to be aspects of this latest phase of capitalism (see also Rikowski, 2000a and 2000b). The other two chapters in the book examine 'Customer-Relationship Management' and 'Business Ethics in the Knowledge Economy'.

Boyett and Boyett refer to the 'gurus' on the main different subjects covered in the book (one 'Guru list' for each chapter). Thus, they list the 'gurus' (or experts) on the knowledge economy, for example, and the 'gurus' on globalization. This is very helpful as a reference tool. At the end of the book they also provide detailed information about all the different gurus referred to throughout the book, in alphabetical order, by the authors surname. There is also a long bibliography and a notes section. Thus, the book is well researched. There is also an index.

The chapter on 'Globalization' is very interesting. Boyett and Boyett are of the opinion that the gurus who research and write about globalisation tend to focus on one of two main issues - the social implications of the emerging global economy or the implications of globalisation for business.

Focusing initially on the first of these two points, Boyett and Boyett cite various critics of globalisation, such as Luttwak, Friedman and French. It is this type of critical analysis that makes the book illuminating and powerful. Luttwak is the author of 'Turbo-Capitalism' (1999) and he argues that globalisation is forcing a new kind of capitalism on the world that is different from the controlled capitalism that we have had in the past. Very interestingly, he refers specifically to the threat to libraries from this new form of capitalism. Thus, in 'Turbo-Capitalism' Luttwak says that what is demanded in this new order is:

"..the privatization of state-owned businesses of all kinds, and the conversion of public institutions, from universities and botanic gardens to prisons, from libraries and schools to old people's homes, into private enterprises run for profit. What they promise is a more dynamic economy that will generate new wealth, while saying nothing about the distribution of any wealth, old or new." (Luttwak, 1999, p. 27)

Friedman, on the other hand, argues that globalisation forces us into an economic and political 'Golden Straitjacket' (as there is, apparently, 'only one way to economic progress' - Boyett and Boyett, p.257) and French is concerned about the environmental problems arising from globalisation. As Boyett and Boyett say, according to these experts: globalization creates tremendous economic inequalities, destroys cultures, and devastates the planet. (Boyett and Boyett, 2001, p.205)

However, having written a useful summary about some of the critics of globalisation, Boyett and Boyett

then seem to be rather dismissive of them and conclude that globalisation is inevitable anyway. From this position, they then decide that there is little to be gained from pursuing these critical issues further, but rather that we need to consider how businesses can succeed in the global economy. Thus, they say: "Globalization is a lot of things, say our gurus, but the most important thing to know is that it is here to stay. That reality leads us to the second big globalization issue. If globalization is here to stay, how do businesses play the game ? How do they succeed in a global economy ?" (Boyett and Boyett, 2001, p.266)

Boyett and Boyett then attempt to answer this question, and it is this dual role that is played throughout the book that exposes the weakness of the book. Is the book attempting to provide a deep, important analysis, or is it just trying to answer questions raised by business and endeavouring to help businesses to succeed in this global economy? (i.e. a 'How to succeed' guide for business!) The writers move from analysis to the seemingly important topic of business success in an apparently seamless fashion, which can only lead to confusion for the reader.

Boyett and Boyett appear to recognise that we are living in free-market capitalism and that this is, in essence, what globalisation is. They refer to Friedman's 'Cold War and Globalization' chart (Friedman, 2000, pp.7-15), for example, which highlights the importance of Professor Joseph Schumpeter's ideas regarding globalisation, where the essence of capitalism is "creative destruction" (Boyett and Boyett, 2001, p.240). Having arrived at this conclusion though, they do not take it further.

They also fall short in this way, in other chapters in the book. In the chapter on the knowledge economy, for example, they explain how we are moving into the knowledge economy and they refer to the importance of value networks and information. Boyett and Boyett say, for example, say that: "Information is the 'glue' that holds together the structure of business" (Boyett and Boyett, 2001, p.45)

They then go to say that we might even be moving into a new 'post-knowledge economy'. Thus, they say that: "A new post-knowledge economy may be emerging that is based not on the exploitation of information, but on stories. This market for feelings may gradually eclipse the market for tangible products. Six such emotional markets can be discerned now: adventures for sale, the market for togetherness, friendship, and love, the market for care, the who-am-I market, the market for peace of mind, and the market for convictions". (Boyett and Boyett, 2001, p.47)

They conclude the chapter by saying that: "Ultimately, we may see the development of an even newer post-knowledge economy in which the chief values won't be food, material things, information, connectivity, emotional satisfaction, or experiences but individual or personal transformations" (Boyett and Boyett, 2001, p.47).

This shows incredible, albeit scary foresight about the direction in which the knowledge economy/post-knowledge economy may be heading. Yet, they do not consider the implications of all this. A real missed opportunity.

Similarly, with the chapter on knowledge management. Boyett and Boyett emphasise the importance of human capital and structural capital for knowledge management (KM), for example, and say: "Knowledge management, say our gurus, is at least about nurturing human capital and then turning human capital into structural capital." (Boyett and Boyett, 2001, p.101)

Then, they look at the works of some of the KM gurus, such as Edvinsson and Malone and Thomas A. Steward and see how they examine human capital and structural capital. However, they do not take the analysis further. What does it actually mean? What does it actually involve? - transforming human capital into structural capital?

In conclusion, this book identifies and explores some of the main directions in which capitalism is going, such as globalisation and the knowledge economy. However, in attempting to provide both an analysis and a critique, as well as a guide to help businesses to succeed, it 'muddies the water' and leaves the reader feeling somewhat dissatisfied and possibly confused. However, given its informative, well-researched and at times, critical nature, it is a worthwhile book to read. It also demonstrates how books

that on the surface might seem to be quite 'conventional' (e.g. supporting the needs of business), can also be quite illuminating and useful, and I suggest that further reading of these types of books could prove to be worthwhile.

References

Edvinsson, Leif and Malone, Michael S. (1997) Intellectual capital: realizing your company's true value by finding its hidden brainpower. New York: HarperBusiness

French, Hilary (2000) Vanishing borders: protecting the planet in the age of globalization. New York: Norton

Friedman, Thomas L. (2000) The lexas and the olive tree: understanding globalization. New York: Anchor Books

Luttwak, Edward (1999) Turbo-capitalism: winners and losers in the global economy. New York: HarperCollins

Rikowski, Ruth (2000a) The knowledge economy is here - but where are the information professionals? (Part 1) in Business Information Review, September, Vol. 17, No. 3, pp. 157-167

Rikowski, Ruth (2000b) The knowledge economy is here - but where are the Information professionals? (Part 2) in Business Information Review, December, Vol. 17, No. 4, pp. 227-233)

Stewart, Thomas A. (1998) Intellectual capital: the new wealth of organisations. New York: Doubeday

---

For enquiries contact
http://libr.org/isc

Information for Social Change

"an activist organisation that examines issues of censorship, freedom and ethics amongst library and information workers..."

ISC 15. Uganda: A personal viewpoint on the Expulsion, 30 years on

Jameela Siddiqi

To use a well-worn clichÃ©, Uganda was, in many ways all things to all men. While the Whites treated expatriate life as one long, heady English summer, the vast majority of Indian traders were really only interested in making money and recreating India. But the Raj educated professional Indians (some of whom arrived much later than the pioneering merchants, whilst others had come early in the 20th century to work as civil servants for the White Master,) often looked down on these moneymaking traders. Some went a step further in trying to recreate British India, complete with a British class system. Basically, everybody imagined this lush, green land of plenty with its immense natural beauty and abundant wildlife, had to, in some way, emulate their original homeland. But those who had rightfully inherited this land could only stand by and look on bemused - bemused by the Brits who had a habit of saying "Nice day, isn't it?" (What else could it be?) and the less amusing Indian habit of starting every sentence addressed to an African with the imperious Swahili word: "Lete!" (Bring, Fetch!)

There have been numerous books on Uganda. But few attempt to shed any meaningful light on just what this multicultural, multiracial hotpot actually amounted to on a day-to- day basis. In the past, any book on Uganda has inevitably turned into a book about General Idi Amin's sexual and cannibalistic exploits. Idi Amin is actually no more, and no less, than a catalyst who finally caused the time-bomb to explode, a time-bomb that was initially planted by the British and then, in many ways nurtured by the Asians themselves who often claimed to be living on "borrowed time." All the time that bomb was ticking away, the vast majority of Asians never thought of Uganda as home. But when ousted heartlessly - and inhumanly - many cried bitter tears of fury for the "homeland" from which they were being forcibly evicted. It took an expulsion to make Uganda feel like home.

A kind of 1960s "Little India," as the more radical African journalists were already describing it.

The attitudes lurking under Amin's seemingly mad actions were certainly built up over many years of hatred, resentment and mutual distrust, otherwise Amin would certainly not have had the unreserved support of his peers. Various other African countries were said to be secretly envious of the "man of action", as Amin frequently defined himself. Why else would they have gathered at an OAU Summit in Kampala in 1975 and lowered their eyes in awe and respect while Amin briefed them all on how he would destroy Israel in a week and put an end to apartheid in South Africa within a fortnight? (Thank God for South Africa, otherwise there was little else feeding into the pseudo-socialist rhetoric of "Pan-Africanism" in those days!) Although a relatively unimportant player in the larger scheme of things, Amin had merely been mentally unhinged enough, and politically and economically naive enough, to actually DO what his predecessors had only fantasised about doing.

As a young (and fairly naive) student at Makerere University in 1972, judging by the reaction of my peers to the Expulsion order, it seemed to me that the vast majority of educated, and reasonable-minded Black Ugandans were actually very supportive of Amin's decision. Although many had suffered the effects of Amin's brutal regime (relatives gone missing, believed killed) they still seemed to think that the Asians were somehow to blame for the political and economic mess that was now Uganda. Every night, in the undergraduates' Common Room, when the countdown for Asians to get out was updated at the end of

the evening news, cheers went up from the Black girls.

These girls asserted that the Blacks needed more of a chance to do their own thing. That such a "chance" would most certainly materialise out of thin air once the exploitative Asians had been booted out, is merely proof of their own short-sightedness. It by no means reflects negatively on Amin, who never once attempted to rationalise his drastic action: others, more sensible and better educated , did it for him. Amin, a devout Muslim, simply said he was acting on God's orders. In Islam, everyone was the same. Nobody was superior to anybody else. So why the hell didn't Asian Muslim girls ever marry Black Muslim men?

Bless Amin, that question could well be asked in today's Tower Hamlets, or Bradford, as easily as it could be asked in Vancouver or Toronto.

In many ways this was a unique emigration in that an entire community re-located itself lock, stock and barrel, to carry on pretty much as before. In Uganda, they had worked hard and they had prospered. That prosperity had allegedly become an eyesore for native Africans. In Britain, they work even harder, and prosperity descends on them by the bucketful. But successive British governments, far from hateful envy, have decided that the Ugandan-Asians are almost the only species of humans worthy of being held up as prime examples of the Protestant Work Ethic. (Whether Jewish or Indian, it usually takes some kind of non-Protestant Christian to become a shining example of the Protestant work ethic!)

So, whatever happened to 'When in Rome?' Because when in East Africa they tried to recreate India, and then, on being expelled to Britain, they transported that same second hand slice of India, but this time with the added delicious effort to try and recreate colonial Africa in Wembley and Tooting. Africa's yesteryear trader is now the British Asian restaurateur introducing his largely well-to-do English clientele to a unique Indian-African food experience. Strangely enough, it is a food experience that is new even for "real" Indians and Pakistanis, many of whom would be hard pressed to mark a cross on a blank map of Africa to show the exact location of Uganda.

But that is today's story, and it is a story that has now taken on global proportions with the East African Asian Diaspora representing an even larger cultural monolith through being equally well established further afield in the USA, Canada and Australia. But that perhaps is a subject for one of my future books.

When the British formally left in 1962 and the Blacks took over, hundreds of Asians swore they would be going back to India or Pakistan. But they didn't. A few sent their wives and daughters to India, (fearing as ever, forced marriages or Black gang rapes) but soon the women were back as no such ludicrous thing had happened. Little could anyone have guessed that in exactly ten years from that date, they would be leaving in thousands, not voluntarily but forcibly, and certainly minus the bulk of their possessions. What's more, they wouldn't be going to the idealised Mother India which had loomed large in the psyche from Day One, but straight into the open arms of Mother Britain, which had until now been considered totally uninhabitable on grounds of its climate and its secular culture of shamelessness. (This factor is portrayed comically in my novel "The Feast of the Nine Virgins")

The only Black Ugandans who were genuinely upset at the Asian expulsion were the very poor ones, many of whom were employed in Asian businesses and homes. Not only would they be losing their jobs, but many had also formed close bonds with their employers. Many an Asian brat would not mind his mother going missing for a few days but would be inconsolable if his Ayah hadn't turned up to work. Domestic servants were a vital link in the whole scheme of things. Their hard work and total dedication had contributed to the idyllic lifestyles of their Asian mem-sahibs, who in turn had sometimes proved extremely charitable in a crisis, but more important, Black African servants were often the only (rather limited) link that Asians had to African culture.

During their years in East Africa - and this applied to Kenya, Tanganyika and Zanzibar as much as it did to Uganda - the Indians had managed their own community affairs from a largely moralistic Indian standpoint. Sometimes this morality was also extended to their Black employees so much so that, domestic servants were expressly forbidden from entertaining sexual partners on the premises. This kind of self-imposed, self-righteous governance had become a convenient substitute for seeking to form any

real Asian political entity. In domestic or matrimonial disputes, Indians doled out justice to other Indians, largely sanctioned from within their own religious communities and sects. At the other end of the spectrum, the socially progressive Ismailis, followers of the Aga Khan, ran a surprisingly modern social welfare system within their own community, with a zero cost to the State. Some of their charitable works were available to all communities, irrespective of religion.

My own personal story - that of losing my Uganda Citizenship and having to find myself a nationality with a deadline of 30 days hanging over my head - is also the subject of a future work. In that book, against a backdrop of various historic landmarks - some well known, others not that well known - a number of hilarious personal anecdotes centred on friends and family highlight the cultural schizophrenia of the Asian settlers. My schoolteacher father's obsession with Chaucer and Fowler takes on ridiculous proportions in the midday sun, while my own romantic fantasies are fed by the imaginary beauty of Bronte country, to say nothing of my idealisation of Austen and Wordsworth. Needless to say, I had never actually SEEN a daffodil, any more than the Black children being taught to say "A for Apple" were actually ever likely to see - or eat - one!

Jameela Siddiqi is a freelance producer, broadcaster and writer. Her first novel, "The Feast of the Nine Virgins" is published by Bogle L'Ouverture Publications, London, 2001.

For enquiries contact
http://libr.org/isc

Information for Social Change

"an activist organisation that examines issues of censorship, freedom and ethics amongst library and information workers..."

ISC 15. I have a dream

Jameela Siddiqi [*]

The Dictator's dream was announced one morning in the main national newspaper. God had appeared in his dream and had ordered him to expel all the Dukavallas - Asian shopkeepers that is, and then, and only then would Pearl be truly liberated, and God's mercy would smile on the fields and flowers....and....er...the shops.

The announcement put Pearl's God-fearing Indian Dukavallas in a very difficult position. How to argue with God's dream? If that's what God wished, then it would have to be obeyed. Which person in his right mind could disobey God?

But was it indeed God who appeared in the Dictator's dream? Well, who was to say that it wasn't? That was the nature of revelations. If you claimed to have had something revealed to you from the Divine, then which God-fearing person would dare dispute that? That would be tantamount to disputing the existence of God himself, and declaring oneself an atheist. And in God-loving, God-fearing, ultra-musical Pearl, atheism was second worst only to mixing up crockery between the races.

There were, nevertheless, those who timidly dared to suggest that the God who appeared in the Dictator's dream with this fearful message may have been some other god, not their God. But how could that be? God was only One! There was only one God, no matter how many dreams he showed up in. And the same God could go from dream to dream with the relative ease of one who was popping in and out of high street shops. So, there was no question of challenging the legality of this drastic order, leave alone crying for outside help, or appealing to rhyme and reason. It was no use.

"It's not my idea," said the Dictator, half-apologetically, in a resigned-to-fate sort of way. "God says I must do it. Believe me, I don't want to...but God's wishes have to be obeyed. Sorry, folks."

God had become very important for the Dictator - more so since becoming the compromise leader of the coup. That spirit of compromise had also necessitated the Dictator's conversion to Islam as a gesture of neutrality and fairness.

Pearl's Northern Province was largely Protestant Christian, the southern Province predominantly Catholic, and coming from the rather small and insignificant Western Province himself, the Dictator decided that taking on a completely different religion would be the best course of action. Just in case the Northern and Southern colonels took their cue from Northern Ireland and found another reason to hate one another. No, don't take risks. Convert to a good, simple, straightforward, peace-loving religion. Safest thing, become a Muslim. That way, neither the Protestants nor the Catholics can get too big for their boots.

Both North and South were thrilled at the conversion. Good move. That way neither Christian sect would assume any unnecessary importance. Pearl was another word for compromise - in all matters, except where God himself intervened and ordained that things should be a particular way. Then there could no compromise. Orders were orders. The Dukavallas would have to go.

What about the others? Not all Muhindis were Dukavallas. The ones that occupied the biggest and best houses were teachers, and doctors and....

No, no, not them. They stay. Only Dukavallas go.

The non-shopkeeper-better-educated Urdu-and-Bengali-speaking Muhindis heaved a sigh of relief. They would get to keep their houses and their gardens and their mosquito-servants. They could hang on to this idyllic climate and their lavish life-styles. Their Brahmin kitchens. Separate crockery for the servants. Spacious servants' quarters rented out to poor Black families. Martini on the lawn. Pimms and Croquet. Chicken sandwiches at sun-downers. Cricket. Bridge. Poetry.

The Martini and cricket set of Muhindis immediately threw their weight behind the Dictator and proclaimed his dream an authentic revelation from the one and only God. Yes, these bloody Dukavallas had exploited the poor Blacks long enough. Wretched Marwaris! Bloody kanjoos-makhichoos Banyas! Serves them right! Kick 'em out!

God was quite considerate, really. Or, he would have been, except that three days later, there was another dream. Again, it was the Dictator's dream, and once again it was on the front page of the morning paper. God had appeared again and added a footnote to the previous dream: The footnote read: "The word Dukavallas, used in this sense, is a synonym for ALL Asians."

From the novel The Feast of the Nine Virgins published by Bogle L'Ouverture Publications, London, 2001.

For enquiries contact
http://libr.org/isc

Information for Social Change

"an activist organisation that examines issues of censorship, freedom and ethics amongst library and information workers..."

ISC 15. Taking power from the global corporations

by Robert Silver

The theft of the White House by George W. Bush is a defining moment in the globalisation of the world economy. A corporate coup followed the Bush campaign's electoral fraud, placing the White House effectively under the control of giant business interests. While the Clinton administration certainly had close links with companies like Monsanto, which financed the president's re-election campaign, the Bush regime's actual merger with global corporations is direct and transparent.

Robert Reich was a labour secretary under Clinton, until he got fed up with business interests foiling his proposals. Now he says: "There is no longer any countervailing power in Washington. Business is in complete control of the machinery of government. It's payback time, and every industry and trade association is busily cashing in."

Long-planned legal actions against tobacco companies have been abandoned, and a series of measures about safety at work scrapped at the behest of big business. Inside government itself the treasury secretary is from the aluminium giant Alcoa. The head of the White House office of management is a former vice-president of a drugs company.

The most obvious sign of these rapid developments was Bush's decision to abandon the Kyoto treaty which pledged signatories to cut carbon dioxide emissions in order to halt the process of global warming. Bush withdrew from the agreement under orders from the corporations.

The US economy is dependent on imported oil and is the biggest market by far for the transnational oil companies. It is also the world's biggest polluter. Refusal by the US to adopt measures to counter global warming reflects the political power of the oil producing and consuming companies.

General Motors, the world's largest corporation, whose products devour oil is now bigger than Denmark in wealth; Daimler Chrysler is bigger than Poland; Royal Dutch/Shell is bigger than Venezuela. The Bush presidency operates for them and them alone. Four of the top five and one quarter of the top 50 corporations are directly associated with oil and motor cars. By 1999 the sales of each of the top five (General Motors, Wal-Mart, Exxon Mobil, Ford Motor, and Daimler Chrysler) were bigger than the GDPs of 182 countries.

Among the US-registered corporations, seven actually paid less than zero in federal income taxes in 1998. These include: Texaco, Chevron, PepsiCo, Enron, Worldcom, McKesson and the world's biggest corporation - General Motors.

Though many of these companies originated in the US, all are now transnationals pursuing the insane logic of their own interests even to the destruction of life on the planet. The impact of the deepening world economic slump on their profits weighs far more heavily than worldwide campaigns of protest.

The corporate take-over of the White House is the most vivid expression of the crisis of the nation state and national governments throughout the world in the face of tremendous economic and financial forces.

Those who have clung to the illusion that you can reform capitalism through the existing electoral process

- either by way of the White House and Congress or Downing Street and Parliament - are undermined by the fact that capitalism has taken control of the political process itself.

What we are seeing, therefore, is the close of the chapter of the evolution of capitalist democracy and the opening up of a direct struggle between the mass of the people and global corporations and their supra-state institutions like the World Trade Organisation and the North American Free Trade Agreement, which drew protests of more than 50,000 at the recent Quebec summit.

Plundering the planet

The process of capitalist development and decline has produced a crisis of historic proportions, deeper and more threatening than that of the 1930s. Immense wealth is transferred from undeveloped to developed capitalist nations to feed the already bloated consumer markets in a hopeless attempt to satisfy the global corporations' insatiable hunger for profit.

Over-production of commodities exhausts the world's supplies of raw materials and spews out waste that poisons the environment, threatening to obliterate life on the planet. These trends are unsustainable.

Global consumption of water is doubling every 20 years, at more than twice the rate of human population growth. More than one billion people, one sixth of the total, already lack access to fresh water. By 2025 the demand for fresh water is expected to be 56% more than is currently available.

Water is traded like any other commodity, with its use determined by market principles. The US Global Water Corporation has already signed an agreement with Sitka, Alaska to export 18 billion gallons per year of glacier water to China. The company will tow the water across the ocean in huge sealed bags and have it bottled by cheap labour in China.

Transnational corporations such as Nike, Sony, and Gap spend billions promoting their brands but subcontract production to zones of super-exploitation in South America and Asia where workers labour in barbaric conditions.

In other parts of the world such as Sierra Leone, weapons and armies are channelled to actual or would-be dictators whose loyalty is bought by transnational corporations in exchange for access to sources of oil, diamonds and raw materials.

Much of Africa has been condemned to disease and starvation as the growing breed of non-governmental charitable and missionary organisations come and go. Uncounted millions are left to die as AIDS sweeps the continent whilst the drug companies study their balance sheets.

The military government in Pakistan is giving away the control over food to transnational corporations (TNCs) engaged in agribusiness. Agriculture is the mainstay of Pakistan's economy, contributing 25 per cent of Gross Domestic Product and 60 per cent of total export earning. More than 70 per cent of Pakistan's labour force is engaged in farming and related activities.

With corporate farming based on maximising profits rather than on producing food for survival, millions of small farmers will be driven off the land, and production will focus on cash crops and seed for export. To boost the government's foreign exchange earnings, food will become scarce in a country where already nearly one fifth of the 135 million population is underfed.

Behind the frenzy - a crisis over profits

What lies behind this frenzy of over-production, marketing, advertising, commercialisation of life-forms and human relations, environmental degradation, social disintegration and the drive to war?

Financiers, investment bankers and shareholders supply funds to enterprises which exist to draw profit from the production and sale of commodities in the marketplace. A profitable industry attracts competition from other producers, obliging them all to continuously reduce the costs of production. This can be reduced to a simple formula - fewer workers producing more commodities more cheaply. Driving up

productivity is the watchword in every industry at all stages in the history of capitalism.

There are two ways to increase productivity: investment in fixed capital, and forcing employees to work longer hours for less money. The two are intertwined. Capital investment involves the purchase of land and buildings to house the production process and machinery to automate it.

But human labour is the source of all value, and profit is but a part of it. To extract profit, companies employ workers and exploit their ability to create more value than the wages they need to survive. This is known as "surplus value".

The competitive drive for productivity pushes the ratio of labour-to-capital towards capital, and fewer workers are employed in relation to the amount invested in computers, networks and buildings. Thus the potential for generating surplus value, and hence extracting profit, declines.

In the United States, investment in computer and telecommunications technologies to automate production and distribution has forced up productivity. Profits continued to flow as wages were forced down. Hourly pay rates were reduced by half - from $26 an hour in 1973 to $13 in 1999. Millions of low and ultra-low wage jobs were created in the US and elsewhere in the world.

As well as reducing pay, the corporations are obliged to use the new technologies to develop new commodities and new markets because the continued and astonishing rise in productivity means that over-production is the norm. As a result, the profit made from each sale becomes smaller and smaller. The quantity of each commodity produced, meanwhile, easily overwhelms and swamps its market. Sackings by Motorola, Ericsson and other hi-tech companies are the end result of this process.

Speculative dot.com hysteria was the herding instinct of the investor desperately seeking new sources of profit which were "immune" from the laws of making profit. The various new business models tried by dot.com companies such as 'free' services, search engines funded by advertising, business-to-consumer and business-to-business, are all fruitless attempts to overcome the rapidly declining rate of profit experienced in other sectors. They reduce costs by streamlining ordering and distribution. They promise to all-but eliminate the retailers who stand between producer and consumer. But they can't stop the profit rot. The deeper the corporations commit to e-commerce, the more they become entangled in the crisis.

To manage their increasingly far-flung enterprises, globalising companies soon discovered the need for global communications networks and sophisticated computer-based tools. They seized upon the Internet. Once the new global entrepreneurs noticed its potential, the "new economy" of computing and communications technologies began to develop at breakneck speed. Ever more sophisticated networks developed to meet the needs of companies operating in many countries simultaneously. These are used to design products, manage contracts with subsidiaries, control production, and to collect, consolidate and analyse data on sales in every country.

This accelerating cyber-revolution produces a vastly expanding output of ever cheaper and more powerful electronic products - hardware, software, information and entertainment. Production of silicon chips and fibre-optic cable requires huge capital investment. But the pressure of competition accelerates scientific advance and revolutionises the techniques of mass production. The information products themselves - news stories and articles, share prices and insurance policies, music tracks, scientific knowledge - are now reproduced for vanishingly small cost.

So the value-added of human labour is limited to the process of producing the "master" copy and profits can be made from that alone. The only way to make money is by enforcing copyright and charging far more than the cost of production for the right to access a copy.

The struggle to overcome the tendency for profit to decline is the self-propelling motor of growth in the capitalist economy. It makes profitable enterprises bankrupt leaving their workers without jobs. New communications technologies have not solved but intensified this process.

The period of growth in the richer parts of the global economy was fuelled by an expansion of credit. New stock markets, such as Nasdaq in the US, and Techmark in the UK, were created to funnel the investment needed to finance the information revolution.

The bubble of overvalued technology companies was dwarfed by the volume of trade on the financial markets. But when over-production leads to bankruptcy, the extent of the fiction of overvalued stock is revealed, markets crash, banks close their networks and their doors.

The emergence of global corporations

The early 1990s brought rapid acceleration in the development of multi- and then transnational corporations (TNCs) seeking new sources of cheap labour. This new drive towards a global economy is quite unlike the imperialism of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The British Empire, for example, was built on trade, with raw materials plundered at the points of many guns. Armies were stationed to rule continents and countries for a century. Imperialism produced a world economy based on unfair terms of trade. Competition for access to markets among imperial powers - acting in the interests of "their" capitalist companies - resulted in two world wars.

Globalisation, the new form of imperialism, operates through the creation of multinational corporations through investment in foreign countries. Rather then reinvest the surplus value where profit is declining, financial capital is exported for investment in low-wage countries.

By the 1990s, the export of finance capital began to replace trade as the dominant form of the world economy. Through "foreign direct investment", capital moved from one country to another - both by purchase of stock in foreign companies, and by the setting up of new companies abroad from scratch. In 1998, sales by foreign affiliates of TNCs stood at $11 trillion, surpassing the $7 trillion traded value of world exports.

In the mid-90s the major capitalist powers created the World Trade Organisation to eliminate national import barriers. It polices the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) which encourages the export of commodities produced cheaply in one country to others where prices are high.

GATS threat to services

Through other agreements the WTO regulates the use of intellectual products (TRIPs), and now, through the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) has begun to insist that public services such as health, education and social services are opened to commercial exploitation. A complex system of cross-border ownership has developed for water, power and other utilities.

Global companies manufacture parts in one country, they export them to another for assembly, and to yet others for distribution. They balance wage costs against closeness to markets.

Manufacture is moved out of the home country to contractors and subcontractors, preferably in underdeveloped countries where labour is cheap, unions and labour laws are non-existent and long tax holidays are available.

The corporations have discovered that there is now little profit to be made from production itself and many companies now bypass production completely. Instead, they concentrate on developing, promoting and defending "brands". Phil Knight, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Nike sums up their rationale: "There is no value in making things any more. The value is added by careful research, by innovation and marketing."

Soaring cost of advertising

As a consequence, advertising expenditure has risen dramatically. US spending in 1998 at $196.5bn was nearly four times that of 1979. Global spending reached $435bn in 1996, up sevenfold since 1950, growing a third faster than the world economy. If all forms of marketing are included, the figure for

global spending approaches a staggering $1 trillion. Little wonder that brands are expensive. Philip Morris paid $12.6bn for the multinational Kraft in 1988, six times its paper value, because of the brand name.

Marketing, advertising, and buying up brands, however, produces little value - a point Mr Knight cannot grasp. They are paid for out of the "value added" by the factory workers who actually produce the products. That is why companies can no longer accept a traditional mark-up of 100% between the cost of factory production and the retail price.

They scour the world for factories where costs are so low that the mark-up is closer to 400% or greater, with the wages of the factory workers constituting an ever-shrinking slice of corporate budgets. Branding is hogging all the "value added" together with the obscene salaries of the corporate executives, the spiralling costs of their marketing personnel and the profits distributed to shareholders.

A great part of production for most multinational corporations is handled by contractors in Export Processing Zones (EPZs) in Asia and South America. There are around 1,000 EPZs in the world employing some 27 million workers. The largest zone economy is China with some 18m people working in 124 EPZs. These zones impose barbaric conditions on the workers, most of them young women.

At the same time that the corporations are producing in underdeveloped countries, they are also reorganising their operations and cutting down their costs in their major markets in the richer countries. To do this they employ a fluid reserve of part-timers, temps and freelancers or contract out the work to job agencies to keep their overheads down and respond quickly to upturns and downturns in the market. Wal-Mart, Starbucks, McDonalds, KMart and Gap are among those which have been lowering workplace standards to fuel their marketing budgets and expansion.

The case for social ownership

The potential exists to harness the technological revolution and global productive forces to satisfy the needs of every person on the planet in a sustainable way. But this is impossible while society is organised solely to extract profit.

The mapping of the human genome offers unprecedented possibilities to predict, prevent and cure disease. This is a collective endeavour involving scientists in many laboratories around the world vastly accelerated by the use of arrays of computers. But rights to use and to profit from this new knowledge are falling into the hands of the new breed of biotechnology corporations. Because private ownership stands in the way of free access to knowledge, the NHS will have to pay the corporations royalties whenever hospitals use the new predictive tests for diseases such as breast cancer.

International patent laws are stretched beyond their limits. Private ownership now extends to a mushrooming catalogue of naturally occurring living matter - from the plants of the rain forest to strains of rice and human tissue. Farmers are losing the right to collect and use the seed from the crops they grow and individuals have no rights over their body parts.

In the arts, internet-based technologies such as those used by Napster and Gnutella provide a direct means of exchange between producers and consumers, bypassing the commercial information service providers. But a small group of entertainment conglomerates invest heavily in technologies which prevent access, and spend millions on court cases to outlaw sharing. More and more people are asking:

• What is the purpose of all these scientific advances and their technological applications if only a few benefit?

• If transnational corporations admit that they only exist to buy products cheaply and make huge profits by creating and promoting brand images, what purpose do they serve?

• If the things that we need can be produced cheaply and in vast quantities but don't generate profit, why not just produce what we need and exchange on the basis of fair trade, eliminating the transnationals altogether?

- If employers exist only to force down the costs of production on behalf of the multinational corporations to whom they subcontract, why shouldn't the employees own and control the companies they work in?

- If all that stands in the way of satisfying the needs of the whole of the world's population is the system of private ownership and production for profit, why not move to a system of social ownership and production for need?

How to set social ownership in motion

Elected committees of producers and consumers can take control of production. These would operate at whatever level is appropriate - local, regional, national, continental or global.

They will set priorities for investment, develop and implement plans for production and organise distribution. Their vision will be the satisfaction of human need, sharing knowledge and deploying technologies to reduce the working week. The employer-employee division will disappear, as workers become owners.

Sustainable, planned production for need will predominate over the anarchy of the competitive market. Social ownership will end the wasteful surplus of products that are obsolete even before they reach the market.

The competitive need to build brands, distinguishing products on the basis of a logo-based image will disappear. Wasteful expenditure on advertising will end, so the cost of production will fall sharply.

Banks, building societies, pension funds and other financial institutions can become socially-owned fund managers, working on a not-for-profit basis, providing low-interest loans financed from individual savings. People who save with them will also own them.

The economic and technical changes driven by globalisation have had dramatic effects on the structure of power based on the nation state, making it unstable, crisis ridden and ripe for overthrow.

The role of national governments has qualitatively changed. Formerly they were defenders of national capital. Their function now is to create social, political and economic conditions attractive to the global corporations, or they move their centres of production and distribution elsewhere.

As global companies move operations from country to country in search of favourable conditions and manipulate balance sheets, so governments suffer loss of tax revenues and therefore loss of power. National governments like Blair's New Labour are reduced to paid promoters of global capital.

They strive to end the role of the state in social welfare, forcing people to make private provision for pensions and health, reducing public services to the point where people have to go private, or handing over utilities and transport systems to global companies to run them for profit regardless of safety.

In Europe, the national legislative process and the judiciary are subordinated to the European Commission and the European courts. Internationally, the World Trade Organisation makes judgements which transcend the decisions of national governments.

The revolutionary road to Global governance

The gap between rich and poor countries has become a vast abyss. The ratio between the incomes of the richest and poorest country was about 3 to 1 in 1820, 35 to 1 in 1950, 44 to 1 in 1973 and 72 to 1 in 1992.

Inequality among households has risen sharply. Gaps between rich and poor are widening rapidly in many countries - most notably in the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States. The gap is very high in much of Latin America.

Liberal critics of capitalism argue that new global institutions could minimise the system's instability, curb the worst excesses of the TNCs so that they operate in a more "social" way. This is a utopian pipe dream based on the assumption that capitalism is a system capable of rational behaviour.

The vast economic and financial forces that have sprung up over two centuries have a life of their own which are not capable of regulation and control while they remain in private hands and run solely for profit. Capitalism gave birth to the very political institutions it now undermines through globalisation. They no longer serve a useful purpose for global capitalism and that is why they are undermined.

For workers whose living standards are under attack, for the unemployed, for independent farmers whose livelihood is stolen by biotechnology corporations and for landless peasants the need is for local, regional and world-level organisations representing their interests in a society which produces for to meet people's needs.

The democratic ideal of multi-party elections with universal adult suffrage became the dominant political form of the nation-state in 20th century. In 1900 no country had achieved this. A century later most have. In the last 25 years of the century 113 countries introduced multi-party elections.

But the universal advance of parliamentary democracy has become a universal fraud. Declining turnout in elections demonstrates the extent of the rejection of the current political system by all sections of society.

Opposition to the effects of global capital is growing as the mass of the people come face to face with those who dominate the planet.

The conditions are emerging for the overthrow of the discredited and crisis-ridden state in each country and the seizure of power by the majority organised with revolutionary leadership. This is the way to get control of the corporations and introduce production and consumption for need.

Making the transition requires that:

- Ownership, control and management of enterprises and infrastructure is transferred to those who work in and operate them
- Elected groups of producers and consumers in every region consult and negotiate to make plans for production and distribution, using the latest technology to measure and satisfy need and demand throughout the world
- Workers and consumers together plan what goods are produced, and control production using safe and sustainable methods
- Banks, building societies, pension funds and other financial institutions are placed under social control and management
- Cheap forms of credit are made available to those who need them, to finance both micro- and macro- levels of development
- Financial speculation, private ownership and private profit are abolished
- A global system of democratic representation is created.

This article first appeared in the Spring 2001 issue of Socialist Future magazine, which is published by the Movement for a Socialist Future.

The Movement for a Socialist Future unites all those who oppose the rule of the global corporations and "Third Way" governments like New Labour. It supports all those fighting injustice, people struggling everywhere for cultural independence, self-determination and diversity and in defence of the environment. It campaigns for a new, not-for-profit society based on co-operation not competition, with mass democratic control of the economy and the state.

Our web site is: http://www.socialistfuture.org.uk

For enquiries contact

Information for Social Change

"an activist organisation that examines issues of censorship, freedom and ethics amongst library and information workers..."

ISC 15. Housmans 2002 Peace Diary with World Peace Directory

Reviewed by John Street

This is the 49th edition of this highly useful little publication, which retains its usual format. It begins with a short feature: last year it related to the start of the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for Children; this year the feature is on using the World Wide Web by activists within the peace movement.

The diary section is a week to a view, running from Monday to Sunday. Each week has its own quote or campaigning note as an introduction and for every day (except January 6 and 26, March 9, June 8, August 19 and September 10) there is an anniversary; the anniversaries included have been changed since last year's diary.

After the week to a view for 2002, there is a four page forward planner section for 2003. Unfortunately, the usefulness of this section is marred somewhat by what is presumably a printing error. In my copy at least, the abbreviations for Monday and Wednesday (Mon and Wed) had been split over two lines, so that the days of the week do not match up with the dates themselves.

The World Peace Directory (a subset of Housmans World Peace Database) gives contact details for almost 2000 organisations throughout the world working for peace and conflict resolution, the environment, and human rights. International organisations are listed first, and the remainder are listed by country, from Afghanistan (four organisations, addresses in Pakistan) and Albania to Zambia and Zimbabwe. The countries with the most organisations listed are Britain (9 pages) and the USA (6 pages). This year there are 66 pages devoted to the Peace Directory, 4 fewer than last year. The publishers claim that this directory is the most comprehensive and up-to-date of its kind published anywhere in the world.

The combined diary and world peace directory will be immensely useful to a wide range of activists, although I suspect that very few will make use of more than a few of its contact details. Its usefulness lies in the fact that they are there and they are comprehensive.

For enquiries contact
http://libr.org/isc

Information for Social Change

"an activist organisation that examines issues of censorship, freedom and ethics amongst library and information workers..."

ISC 15. Tackling social exclusion

John Vincent

What is social exclusion?

There is a major difference in thinking between the terms social inclusion and social exclusion. Social exclusion focuses on the needs of those who are excluded. This includes groups and individuals who suffer direct and indirect discrimination, as well as larger sections of the population - such as some children and young people, older people and women - who find themselves subject to multiple disadvantage, and therefore excluded. Exclusion also affects certain localities - for example, some rural areas, parts of the inner city. By focusing on 'exclusion', we draw attention to needs, identify specific groups and individuals, and target services to them.

Social inclusion focuses not just on the needs of the excluded, but also looks at the effects on the rest of society. This can take the form of concern for the plight of others, but it can also manifest itself as a fear of the consequences of exclusion - for example, the fear that crime will affect others' quality of life, or that there will be a major economic impact as a result of paying benefits, repairing vandalism, and so on.

Tackling social exclusion is different from other initiatives:

- Equal Opportunities policies have tended to focus on providing more of the same, and assuming that this will inevitably increase take-up
- Access policies have tended to focus on physical access to buildings and their contents
- Audience development has tended to look at developing our existing users and looking at bringing in non-users
- All of these are vital, but work to tackle social exclusion also means changing entire working policies and practices, looking at ways of overcoming barriers, how to reach non-users, how to work with all our users.

How well are public libraries tackling social exclusion?

If we go back a couple of years, then the picture was fairly bleak. When we (1) carried out the research for the report, "Open to all?" (2) , in 1999 (for which we sent a questionnaire to every public library authority in the UK, and received a 63% return), we discovered just how patchy the work really was:

- 24% of authorities that responded had little or no social inclusion strategy and few/patchy service developments
- 60% were concerned with inclusion but had uneven/intermittent activity
- 16% had developed policy and good practice, and had service-wide initiatives.
- In terms of service priority, we showed that far from being 'open to all', there was actually a clear hierarchy of provision:
- 82% of the authorities that responded had housebound people as a service priority, whereas
- 12% had Travellers as a service priority
- 5% had homeless people as a service priority.

We were also particularly concerned that only 54% of authorities had racial and ethnic minorities as a

service priority after the years in which library authorities had claimed to be providing good levels of service [3] .

Barriers to take-up of service

One of the keys to tackling social exclusion successfully is to identify and remove barriers to take-up of library use. The major barriers are listed in Libraries for all [4] and can be grouped under the four headings:

- Institutional (eg charges; rules)
- Personal and social (eg lack of confidence to ask for what you need; lack of basic skills)
- Perceptions and awareness (eg 'the library's not for us'; 'you have to pay to join')
- Environmental (eg location; physical access to and within the building)

Many libraries are successfully dismantling these barriers - some examples follow - yet, at the same time, many library workers are in the throes of creating new barriers, for example: "It's not our proper job" - do you recognise this comment? People in libraries seem to say it frequently now - it's as though they don't see the immense changes that are going on around us, and the exciting new directions that libraries are going in, but want to cling to some outdated notion of what libraries are for. Libraries are constantly changing, and we need to take hold of these opportunities and shape them.

"They're not our proper users" - one of the exciting by-products of having ICT developed via the People's Network is that libraries are suddenly being used by a whole new lot of people, refugees e-mailing home for example, yet library staff talk about them as not being 'proper' users. What are we for? We need to re-look urgently at the role and purpose of public libraries to ensure that we are encompassing these new users.

"This is nothing to do with us - it's a Government-driven, political agenda" - this is what some library workers seem to have argued about every development there's ever been! In this case, it is certainly true that work to tackle social exclusion is a core part of the Government agenda, but we would argue that it should also have been a core part of public libraries' agenda for years too - indeed, for some library services, of course, it has been. What is different now is that the Government is not just providing access to funding, it is also attaching 'strings', ensuring that money is not just frittered away on 'pet projects', but is targeted towards the socially excluded. This may also, of course, have a political undertone to it - see the next section.

A backlash against social inclusion - or just misunderstandings?

There is also, as I write, something of a small backlash against social exclusion work.

For example, in her recent letter to The Daily Telegraph [5] , library manager Heather Marsh says (apparently confusing social inclusion with consumer-orientated policies):

"As in the health and police services, those in charge have little contact with those at the sharp end. Members of the public using the libraries have also changed; far from issuing books to sweet little old ladies, staff now have to face daily abuse, aggression and demands from people who thanks to a government policy of 'social inclusion', are well aware of their rights, but not their responsibilities."

In her letter to CILIP Update about what she did not agree with in Merton, former library manager Philippa Cain writes: "Class, colour and shape make no difference to the quality of a person's need." No, perhaps they don't, but they do tend to determine who uses our services in the first place.

Finally, in a piece in The Independent [6] recently, Josie Appleton (author of Museums for "the people"? published by the Institute of Ideas) writes:

"Indeed, [museums] are even sneered at as being exclusive and intimidating. Increasingly money in local museums projects is not directed towards building up and preserving collections; it is going instead

towards new social and political aims, such as social inclusion projects and neighbourhood renewal ... A report on social inclusion by the Group for Large Local Authority Museums shows just how much priorities have become distorted in many local museums".

What these three different pieces seem to me to have in common is a misunderstanding of what social exclusion is, of the role that we need to play to tackle it, and of the historical legacy of many public libraries' (and museums') lack of engagement with lapsed, potential and non-users. It is this lack of relevance of public libraries - and museums - to many people's lives that threatens our future, not the fact that some organisations are trying to create more welcoming and inclusive facilities.

Good practice - policy implementation

There is now a handful of public library authorities that have made major advances in developing - and most importantly - implementing policy. For example:

- Gloucestershire have just produced their strategic plan for tackling social exclusion (7) , and, as part of this, have committed 20% of their resources to combating exclusion, as well as alerting Members (and other Council departments) that they need to deal with the tension between income-generation and social exclusion work.
- Leicester City used a review of the library service to re-focus on tackling social exclusion, and, based on this, have made major changes to the delivery of the service, as well as obtaining a greater financial commitment from the Council. Their forward planning has just received praise from the Audit Commission as part of the Best Value Review process.
- Merton has re-focused the service around three key objectives - lifelong learning, economic regeneration, community development - and is developing locally-based services in consultation with local people. In recognition of the pioneering work being undertaken to deliver services for refugees and asylum-seekers, Merton won the "Libraries Change Lives" Award in 2001. More about these developments can be found in John Pateman's recent article (8) .

Good practice - services for children and young people

A number of children's library services have been pioneering work in tackling social exclusion, and some important examples are show-cased in a recent YLG publication (9) : this includes not only descriptions and ideas for developing services, but also contains contact details for each piece of work described.

Good practice - mobile library services tackling social exclusion (10)

Clearly, good mobile library services are in the forefront of removing barriers and tackling social exclusion, for example:

- Tackling rural isolation/transport problems
- Bringing library services to suburban areas which are isolated/without good transport links
- Providing library services in the inner cities.
- However, tackling social exclusion has to involve more than just providing a mobile library service. It also needs to involve:
- Mainstreaming service provision so that it is part of the whole library service, not seen as an 'add-on'
- Outreach - not in the 1970s version, but as a way of ensuring dynamic links with the community in and out of libraries
- Engagement with local communities
- Partnership-building
- Sustainability - projects are great for starting off a service and testing it, but, if it works, then it needs to become a funded, permanent feature.
- Finally, there is great work being undertaken by mobile library services across the country. However, we also need to make absolutely sure that mobile libraries are not, in themselves, creating new barriers, such as:
- Are mobile stops rather like a club, where a few people are known and welcomed, but many are

- Is our staffing representative of the local community?
- How reliable are our vehicles? We need only miss a few days, and people will stop looking out for the service
- Are our vehicles really accessible?
- Are there safety/security issues? Are there places where the mobile cannot stop? And how are we dealing successfully with these issues?
- Is the stock relevant? Is it regularly changed to meet the needs of different parts of the community?
- Let's remind ourselves that mobile libraries were invented to tackle social exclusion - and let's continue to develop high-quality, relevant services.
- Good practice - other examples
- The following recent examples have been taken from The Network's Newsletter, showing what Network member authorities have been developing:
- Stoke-on-Trent Library Service has been developing their service provision for people with dyslexia, including developing staff training and mentors, holding drop-in sessions in 6 libraries, purchasing Kurzweil software, setting up listening booths in two libraries, creating publicity, holding a major event to tie in with Family Learners' Weekend (11) ;
- Derbyshire has installed an ISDN in community buildings so that the mobile library service can plug in and deliver ICT to those without easy access to it otherwise (12) ;
- East Dunbartonshire have been looking at ways of developing their services for Black and ethnic minority communities, and a brief outline - including some key questions for creating best practice - was included in a recent Newsletter (13) ;
- Gloucestershire have built a Website (14) in partnership with other local organisations to provide information for refugees and asylum-seekers and those who work with them (15) .
- The role of The Network

The Network ("The Network: tackling social exclusion in libraries, museums, archives and galleries", to give it its full title) was formed in 1999 (originally as the Social Exclusion Action Planning Network), and now has 85 institutional members, including public libraries, museums, archives and other organisations, as well as 15 individual members.

We produce a monthly Newsletter to keep members up-to-date with initiatives in the work to tackle social exclusion, and run courses and conferences, as well as contributing to national and regional developments.

We received a small seed-funding grant from the then Library and Information Commission in 1999, but, until this year, have received no funding apart from income from subscriptions and from courses and conferences. However, for this year, we are receiving a grant from Resource to enable The Network to:

- Continue with our core work, with particular emphasis on strengthening and developing the work with museums and archives
- Update and maintain the CSG Website, "inclusionandlibraries"
- We are also receiving a grant from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation for a project to draw together good practice in library work with looked-after children and to develop and pilot a training programme, and I'll shortly be looking for partner library services to work with.

The Network - delivering training

Public libraries have had to make a major commitment to training over the last two years or so in order to equip staff for their role in the People's Network: this is crucial, but it is also critical that the same kind of commitment is made to training for other areas of service delivery, especially the skills, knowledge and awareness required to tackle social exclusion.

A major part of the Network's work is running training courses and conferences. Originally, these had been almost entirely the Network's own open courses, looking at the specific needs of particular socially excluded groups and individuals, but, more recently, the pattern has changed to:

- In-house courses - more about this in a moment
- Contributing to other people's courses (such as the Library + Information Show, the NIACE Conference at the V&A, the North-East CSG/CDG course on services for refugees and asylum-seekers)
- Running courses for other people (eg courses for CILIP).

The in-house courses we run are tailored to meet the specific needs of the authority, and include:

- Awareness sessions for senior and middle managers (including work on definitions, the 'bigger picture' - the Government/Resource/CILIP agenda, identifying and removing barriers). Resource are working with The Network, the RCMG at Leicester University, the National Council on Archives and Society of Archivists to develop an awareness course for managers across the three domains (16) .

- Awareness and practical sessions for front-line staff
- Work on meeting the needs of specific socially excluded groups (eg refugees and asylum-seekers; lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgendered people; children and young people who are socially excluded)
- A particularly interesting development recently has been for the Network to work with a library service in more depth, for example:
- Wandsworth - following a training session for managers (and a follow-up session 6 months later to help them review progress), I am now running courses for their Children's Librarians, Librarians and Senior Library Assistants
- Bristol - I have run a course for 7 different groups of managers, looking at the 'bigger picture' for public libraries - not just social exclusion - and helping them to assess how they were succeeding in meeting these new priorities and plan for future developments
- Glasgow - I have spoken at three staff development days about social exclusion and how to tackle it, worked twice with groups of managers and front-line staff, and facilitated a discussion on social exclusion with some of the Community Learning Team.

These programmes of training have demonstrated the obvious commitment of many library workers to try to break down barriers and deliver a socially-inclusive service. However, at the same time, it is also clear that many managers are themselves not 'up-to-speed' with developments at a national level - I'm still amazed by the number who have only a shadowy grasp of the role and work of Resource, for example - and therefore cannot be in a position to keep their staff on track.

In addition, whilst, as I noted above, many library workers are keen to develop this work, there are obviously many who are not. Some of these will be people who don't understand what tackling social exclusion is all about; some will be people who think that social exclusion doesn't apply to their area/service; some will be people whose views form part of the new barriers identified above; and some, presumably, will be people who do not agree politically with tackling social exclusion - see below.

What, if anything, is the 'key' that will turn them on to this kind of work? That's the area that interests me as a trainer most - and why, after nearly 30 years of running courses, I still get a kick out of it! I'm still searching for the answer. Our open17 autumn programme includes the following:

- A one-day course on managing public libraries to tackle social exclusion, Preston, 17 September
- A Conference to look at rural social exclusion issues, Norwich, 25 September
- A Conference to disseminate the good practice developed during Kent Arts & Libraries' reading development project with refugees and asylum-seekers, "Words without Frontiers", London, 26 September
- A cross-domain course (looking at tackling social exclusion in libraries, museums and archives) for NEMLAC, 31 October.

Further information about The Network can be obtained from:

John Vincent, Wisteria Cottage, Nadderwater, Exeter EX4 2JQ

Tel/fax: 01392 256045

E-mail: john   nadder.freeserve.co.uk.

Notes:

(1) The research team consisted of: Shiraz Durrani (Merton), Martin Dutch (Sheffield), Rebecca Linley (then Leeds Metropolitan University, now Resource), Dave Muddiman (Leeds Metropolitan University), John Pateman (Merton), John Vincent.

(2) Open to all? The public library and social exclusion. Volume 1: Overview and conclusions. Resource, 2000.

(3) This bears out the findings of the work by Patrick Roach and Marlene Morrison

(4) Libraries for all: social inclusion in public libraries - policy guidance for local authorities in England. DCMS, 1999

(5) The Daily Telegraph "Comment" 20 May 2002, p19.

(6) Josie Appleton "Distorted priorities are destroying local museums", The Independent 29 May 2002, p16.

(7) http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=8087

(8) John Pateman "Cultural revolution" Update, April 2002, pp42-3.

(9) All our children: social inclusion and children's libraries. Youth Libraries Group, 2001.

(10) The section on mobile library services is taken from a talk given by John Vincent to the Mobilemeet in Essex, 18 May 2002.

(11) Newsletter 28, Aug 2001, pp8-12.

(12) Newsletter 26, June 2001, pp8-9.

(13) Newsletter 27, July 2001, pp3-4.

(14) http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/asylum

(15) Newsletter 27, July 2001, pp7-8.

(16) Libraries, archives, and museums/galleries.

(17) As noted above, The Network also runs in-house training courses: during the autumn, we'll be running courses for Poole, Norfolk, the CIPFA Benchmarking Club.

For enquiries contact
http://libr.org/isc